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HOW TO APPRECIATE THE DRAMA

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JULIA MARLOWE

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HOW TO APPRECIATE THE DRAMA

*An Elementary Treatise on
Dramatic Art*

By
Thomas Littlefield Marble, A.B., LL.B.



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TO
MY MOTHER

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PLAYWRIGHTS AND ACTORS

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INTRODUCTION

HOW TO APPRECIATE THE DRAMA

CHAPTER I

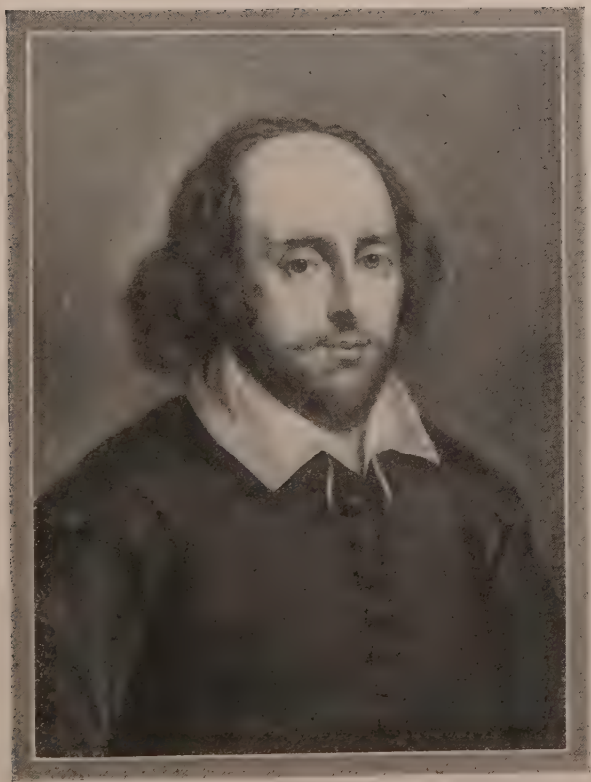
INTRODUCTION

The Botanist.— It is doubtless true, if we are to believe what psychologists tell us, that we see little in this world which we are not first taught to see. To the student trained in the science of Botany, “a primrose by a river’s brim” is much more than a “yellow primrose,” for he has been taught to see calyx, petal, stamen, and all the complex botanical elements of which the little flower is composed. More than this, his intimate knowledge of structure does not rob the botanist of artistic appreciation. Who of us has not envied him the pleasure and enthusiasm he is wont to display at the sight of an object, which, to our own untrained eyes, is merely “a yellow primrose” and “nothing more”?

Analysis of the Dramatic Flower.— So it is with that exquisite flower of literary expression which we are pleased to term the drama. Many a student of scientific tendencies shows a marked antipathy to the study of

dramatic literature merely because he has never been taught the use of scalpel and microscope. His analytical powers, which are given full play in the realm of the sciences, so-called, being all too frequently tabooed in the study of the drama, he not unnaturally reaches the conclusion that he is not "literary," and is therefore content to let those whose minds he conceives to be illogical and unscientific carry off the honors of a study so impracticable.

The Aim of This Treatise.— The botanical analogy will not be pursued further, but the theme will be treated from the standpoint of practical dramaturgy, the aim of the author being to point out (with no claim to originality) a few of those structural elements of dramatic composition which seem to him most likely to stimulate in minds of an analytical trend an interest in the construction and development of plays.



SHAKESPEARE

DEVELOPMENT OF
DRAMATIC FORMS

CHAPTER II

THE DEVELOPMENT OF DRAMATIC FORMS

The Origin of the Classical Drama—The Sacred Drama in England—Moralties and Interludes—The Chronicle Play and the Tragedy of Blood—Comedy and Tragedy—The Evolution of the Theatre.

The Origin of the Play Impulse.—Before considering the structural principles of dramatic art, it may be well to review briefly the history of the English drama.

The early life of nations as well as individuals is marked by a fondness for games and plays, and it is therefore, to the childhood of the human race that we must look for the origin of the play impulse. The minstrels of antiquity catered to a theatrical taste, and even the religious worship of ancient times assumed a dramatic form.

The Evolution of the Greek Drama.—It was out of the famous choral hymn known as the *dithyramb*, sung in honor of Dionysus, or Bacchus, the god of wine, that the Greek drama was evolved. About the year 536 B. C., Thespis, a semi-legendary Greek poet, is supposed to have attached to the old dithyrambic chorus a single actor who appeared successively in different rôles, reciting his monologues in the intervals of the choruses.

The Contribution of Æschylus.— A second actor was later introduced by Æschylus. This actor replied to the first, and dialogue thus superseded monologue.

The Drama of Sophocles.— It remained for Sophocles to bring a third performer upon the scene. Each of the three actors assumed various characters; wider scope was given to theatrical representations, and the chorus became subsidiary.

The Source of the English Drama.— Although critics have sought to prove that the modern drama owes its origin to the Greek, all attempts “to link together the names of Æschylus and Shakespeare” have failed, and it is now generally conceded that the early English plays were altogether free from Greek influence. During the ascendancy of imperial Rome, dramatic presentations were forbidden by the church, but in the middle ages tableaux were employed by the clergy for illustration, and finally liturgical plays began to be given in the church itself. Thus, the modern drama, though springing like the ancient Greek plays from religious worship, is, in point of fact, medieval rather than classical in its origin.

The Mystery Play. — Strictly defined, the Mystery Plays were dramatizations of Biblical stories exclusively. The name “mystery” was given plays of this description in France. They were not so termed in England.

The Miracle Play.—The Miracle Plays dealt with legendary incidents in the lives of the saints of the church. French playwrights are supposed to have introduced plays of this character into England after the Norman Conquest, and these plays were doubtless the first which the English public witnessed. Later, when sacred dramas began to be written in English, the term Miracle Play, with which the public had become familiar through the French performances, was applied indiscriminately to all dramatic representations of a sacred character, including plays more properly classified as Mysteries.

The Morality Play.—Allegory was the distinguishing feature of the Morality Play. The characters in this class of drama were abstract qualities personified; such, for example, as Avarice, Pride, and the like. Popular Moralities were *Everyman* and *The Castle of Perseverence*. This type of play has been revived extensively in recent years. Walter Browne's *Everywoman* is a notable example of the modern Morality Play.

The Interlude.—Interludes were short, mirthful dramas resembling the Morality Play. They were thus named because frequently given between the acts of the older Mysteries and Moralities, or during the intervals of festivals and other celebrations. As an evolutionary type the Interlude is important, since it marked an advance in dramatic development by introducing in place of personified abstractions individual characters representing different classes of society. For example,

in John Heywood's *The Four P's*, the characters are a Peddler, a Pardoner, a Palmer, and a Poticary. The Interlude brought the drama a step nearer to genuine comedy.

The Chronicle Play.—The Chronicle Play was historical in its nature, and dealt with the principal events of a given reign. It was the forerunner of the great historical dramas of Shakespeare. Bale's *King John* is a well-known specimen.

The Tragedy of Blood.—As the name signifies, the Tragedy of Blood was crude, sensational, violent, and brutal. Thomas Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy*, replete with murders and sudden deaths, belongs to this type of drama. The Tragedy of Blood is interesting as pointing the way to loftier realms of art. Indeed, it is believed that *Hamlet* was founded upon an old Tragedy of Blood.

The First Comedy and Tragedy.—Like all evolutionary processes, the transition from liturgical plays to comedy and tragedy was infinitely slow. However, about the year 1551, *Ralph Roister Doister*, the first comedy in the English language, was written by Nicholas Udall. This was followed, some ten years later, by the production of Sackville and Norton's *Gorbuduc*, which has the distinction of being the first English tragedy.

Early Methods of Dramatic Presentation.—The early sacred dramas were probably first performed inside

the churches by the priests. Later, they were presented on stages erected outside the church, the audience assembling in the churchyard. At length, they became dissociated from the church altogether, and were given by the city trades-guilds either in the halls of the guilds, or in the public squares on platforms attached to vehicles which could be moved from place to place in the town. There were usually two platforms, one placed above the other, the lower platform being curtained and used for a dressing-room. Each guild prepared a play, the story of the Bible being enacted from Creation to Doomsday.

The Origin of the Pageant.—The plays of the guilds were given in succession, one vehicle following another to the place of performance. “Originally each vehicle was called a pageant,” says William Echard Golden in his *History of the English Drama*. “Afterwards the word pageant came to imply the show as well as the stage. Finally it was applied to the whole series of shows, whence the modern meaning.”

The Building of Theatres.—Companies of strolling players were gradually organized, and plays began to be given in castles and in the courtyards of inns. We know that one roving company came to Stratford-on-Avon while Shakespeare was a youth. At first it was necessary for actors to attach themselves to the household of some nobleman and wear his livery, in order to escape punishment under the laws against vagabondage, but as public interest in playgoing increased, the laws became

less stringent, and theatrical companies were licensed to perform. At last, in the latter part of the sixteenth century, permanent playhouses were constructed, and with their erection the English drama became a flourishing institution.

Summary.— Both the ancient Greek drama and the early English drama, though entirely independent of each other, originated in religious worship. At first confined to the field of Bible stories, the English drama slowly broadened its scope, (1) embracing the legends of the saints, (2) teaching moral truth by personified abstractions, (3) introducing individual types, and (4) finally portraying human character in action through the media of comedy and tragedy.

Having thus considered the growth of dramatic forms, we now begin our examination of the internal structure of the completed play.



MOLIERE

STRUCTURAL PRINCIPLES

CHAPTER III

STRUCTURAL PRINCIPLES

The Unities — The Influence of the Playhouse on Dramatic Structure
— The Plot: Its Source and Form — Methods of Plot Development.

The Three Unities.— No canon of dramatic art has exerted greater influence over the literature of the stage than has the “so-called Aristotelian law of unity of time, of place and of action.” Though attributed to Aristotle, the theory of the three unities, as Professor Brander Matthews has explained, was probably “worked out by the supersubtle Italian critics of the Renaissance.” Briefly defined, this law may be said to demand (1) that the scene of a play be laid in one place, (2) that the series of acted events be such as might occur approximately within the time required to present the play, and (3) that nothing be admitted which is “irrelevant to the development of the single plot.”

Observance of the Unities by Ibsen and by Shakespeare.— The great Norwegian playwright Ibsen, though in many respects revolutionary, has not infrequently observed both unity of place and unity of time; and even Shakespeare, whose mighty creative genius was naturally intolerant of conventional restraint, paid due homage to

these rules in *The Tempest* and in *The Comedy of Errors*. For the most part, however, Shakespeare seems to have felt it unnecessary to conform to these artistic laws, being able by his unerring intuition to attain, without their artificial aid, that full and perfect harmony of plot, structure, and tone, which the unities were designed to secure.

Modern Observance of the Unities.—But some of our modern dramatists have apparently considered it incumbent upon them to yield strict obedience to these classic mandates. The scene of Charles Rann Kennedy's remarkable play *The Servant in the House* is laid in a single room, and the action is continuous, the characters at the opening of each succeeding act taking up the dialogue at the point of its termination in the preceding act.

The True Purpose of the Unities of Time and Place.—Concerning the unities of time and place, it is important to remember that they are at best mere artificial limitations, designed primarily for the purpose of attaining that complete unity of structure which every true work of art should possess. They are "purely fictitious principles," says Ward in his *Introduction to English Dramatic Literature*, "to either of which it may be convenient to adhere in order to make the unity of an action more distinctly perceptible, and either of which may with equal propriety be disregarded in order to give the action probability."

What Constitutes Compliance with Unity of Place.—

These laws do not always demand absolute allegiance. Thus, in the successive acts of a drama, the playwright may give us different glimpses of the same uniform scene, and yet show adequate deference to the scenic unity of place. This is true of *The Tempest*, where Shakespeare, though confining the locality of his action to the geographical limits of a single island, yet presents to our view different parts of that island.

What Constitutes Compliance with Unity of Time.—

In general, it may be said that unity of time is sufficiently observed if the acted events of a given play are represented as happening within the space of twenty-four hours.

Narration of Prior Occurrences.— But it is interesting to note that the playwright who adheres to the above rule with any degree of strictness is compelled to suspend the forward movement of his play while the characters are made to relate certain incidents of prior occurrence from which the onward motion of the drama has received its primary impulse. Again referring to *The Tempest*, Professor Richard G. Moulton in his *Shakespeare as a Dramatic Artist* calls attention to the fact that “when the keynote of the action has been struck by the brief dialogue between Prospero and Miranda, the action stands still for more than three hundred lines, and the interval is used to give us back-glances into the past.”

Unity of Action.—Unity of action demands (1) a single plot, and (2) the rigorous exclusion of all that does not contribute directly to the development of that plot. Sophocles and the other early Greek dramatists were strict followers of this rule. To them “unity of action” was synonymous with “single action,” and meant hardly more than the development of a single idea (as, for instance, a crime and its punishment) by a series of closely connected events. But Shakespeare, while he never failed to unite the component parts of his drama into a single whole, seldom regarded an inflexible law of plot restriction as a necessary means to this end.

The Influence of the Elizabethan Theatre on Dramatic Structure.—Any intelligent consideration of the structural side of the Shakespearian drama, however, should take account of the circumstances under which Shakespeare’s plays were actually performed. The theatres of Shakespeare’s time were modeled after the old courtyards; they were poorly lighted, and were practically devoid of scenery. The playgoer was expected to draw upon his imagination with the utmost freedom. The mind that could visualize the resplendent beauty of Venice without pictorial representation was not likely to complain of any lack of unity even in a play which was compounded of two stories, which transferred the scene back and forth from Venice to Belmont, and which extended over a sufficient period of time to account for Antonio’s losses.

The subdivision of acts into scenes (and it has been

questioned if Shakespeare ever made such subdivision) could not have interfered in the slightest degree with the continuity of the dramatic movement, since there was no scenery to be set, and the characters of the coming scene simply moved forward as their predecessors receded from view. Much that scenery now accomplishes had then to be supplied by words, and we should be careful not to lose sight of that fact when we criticise the construction of a Shakespearian play.

The Influence of the Modern Theatre on Dramatic Structure.— The conditions surrounding the modern theatre are vastly different from those surrounding the theatre of Shakespeare's time. The required atmosphere is now produced largely by artistically conceived stage-settings and wonderfully manipulated lights — an environment which calls for a drama, compact, clear-cut, and stripped of non-essentials, a drama, in short, that is built on scientific lines. In the rush of contemporary life, the voice that is heeded must speak a direct, forceful message; and the play that carries a swift and strong appeal is quite likely to conform to the unity of action.

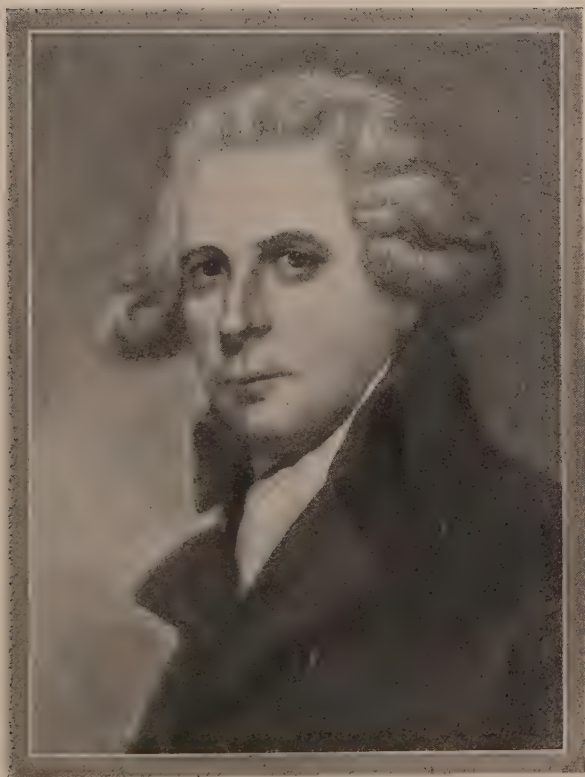
The Plot.— Plot has been defined as “the story of a play, poem, novel or romance comprising a complication of incidents which are at last unfolded by unexpected means.”

The Sources of the Plot.— Plots may be either original or borrowed. Shakespeare was largely indebted to

other writers for the plot materials out of which he constructed his plays. The story of the pound of flesh and the tale of the caskets had long been embodied in story form when Shakespeare wrote *The Merchant of Venice*. A modern instance of borrowed plot material is to be found in *The Heart of Maryland* by David Belasco. In this play, the incident of the girl who saved her lover's life by hanging to the clapper of the bell so that the alarm could not be given was doubtless suggested by the popular poem *Curfew Must not Ring Tonight*.

The Form of the Plot.—Plots may be simple or complex. Shakespeare's *Julius Cæsar* is a good illustration of simple plot, comprising as it does a single story dealing with the contest between Cæsar's friends and Cæsar's enemies. The plot of *King Lear*, on the other hand, is extremely complex, being composed of a number of separate actions and their combinations.

The Arch-Like Method of Plot Development.—The favorite Shakespearian method of plot development is arch-like in form, comprising a regular rise and fall of fortune or passion, with the turning point in the centre of the play. Professor Moulton, in his work already referred to, points out the fact that Macbeth's undertakings are uniformly successful up to the time he despatches the murderers against Banquo and Fleance. This enterprise is only half successful, since Fleance escapes. The escape of Fleance, which occurs in the exact centre of



SHERIDAN

the play, is the turning point of the plot (or "keystone to the arch"), and from that instant disaster attends Macbeth's every move till the culmination of the tragedy.

The "Rise and Fall" Method Applied to Groups of Plays.— Shakespeare has also employed this method of depicting a rise and fall of fortune in the treatment of the *motif* which underlies certain groups of plays. Thus the ten historical dramas (*King John*, *Richard II*, the two parts of *Henry IV*, *Henry V*, the three parts of *Henry VI*, *Richard III*, and *Henry VIII*) have been regarded by certain critics as ten separate acts in a colossal drama dealing with the usurpation of the English throne by the House of Lancaster, the prologue of which is *King John*, the epilogue, *Henry VIII* — the rise of fortune culminating in *Henry V*.

Likewise the four tragedies, *Coriolanus*, *Julius Cæsar*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, and *Timon of Athens*, have been thought to represent the rise and fall of Roman power.

The Catastrophic Method of Plot Development.— A very different method of plot development is that which Edmund Gosse attributes to Ibsen. Mr. Gosse does not find in the Ibsen plays any attempt to depict a rise and fall of fortune. The period of success is over and the impetus downward has been received before the play opens. It is not the cause but the result that engages Ibsen's attention, and in his "analysis of fatal consequences he has been thought more to resemble Sophocles than any of the moderns." Mr. Gosse believes that

Ibsen has "added a new branch to dramatic literature by inventing the drama of catastrophe."

"Ghosts" as an Example of the "Drama of Catastrophe." — The gruesome little tragedy *Ghosts* is an excellent example of the particular form of dramatic expression to which Mr. Gosse calls attention. Heredity is the problem of the play. The young man who figures so conspicuously in the drama is the son of a dissipated and dissolute father, whose profligate life is reflected in the mental fibre of his son. Debarred by his inheritance from pursuing the artistic career which he craves, the young man turns for sympathy and love to the girl of his choice only to find that she is an illegitimate daughter of his own father, and that marriage with her is therefore impossible.

Fully aware that he must pay the price of his dead father's misdeeds, the son pledges his mother to take his life when the first symptom of his dreaded malady manifests itself; then, with bitterness in his heart, he awaits the end. It comes accompanied by all the theatrical splendor of a roseate dawn, and the boy, his brain fast weakening into idiocy, pleads piteously to be given the rising sun.

The mother tears her hair and shrieks with horror as she realizes that her boy's dread prophecy is fulfilled. Then, remembering her pledge, she falls on her knees before him, and is groping frantically in his pockets for the fatal drug, when the curtain mercifully descends upon the scene.

The reader of this play will be impressed by the fact that the "primary circumstance," the sin of the father, antedates the action of the drama. The seed has been sown when the play begins, and it is the harvest of "fatal consequences"—the "inevitable catastrophe"—with which Ibsen is chiefly concerned.

Summary.— We have thus seen that for the purpose of molding his work into a harmonious whole, the playwright frequently adopts definite artificial rules called the three unities; that the story of the drama may be borrowed or original, simple or complex, and that there are two notable types of plot development.

With these structural principles in mind, we now pass to a consideration of some of the more minute details of dramatic workmanship.

NATURALNESS
HEIGHTENED EFFECTS

CHAPTER IV

NATURALNESS AND HEIGHTENED EFFECTS

Prose as the Natural Vehicle of Expression — The Substitution of Action for Soliloquy — Methods of Introducing Light, Music, Tumult, and other Emotional Stimuli — Humanizing Methods — Incredible Events Rendered Natural by Anticipatory Allusion — The Introduction of Objects.

The Decline of Verse. - Naturalness is the keynote of all modern art, and nowhere is that note more insistently sounded than in the modern drama. People in real life do not speak in metrical numbers, and for that reason writers of acted plays of the present day have quite generally discarded blank verse as a vehicle of dramatic utterance. Ibsen's early plays were written in verse, but his conviction that he could not create the illusion of actual occurrences and true living characters by the use of rhythmic dialogue led him to adopt prose in the composition of his later and more realistic dramas. He felt that the form of literary expression should be determined by the degree of ideality with which the subject was treated; he "would not have the Venus of Milo painted," but "would rather see a negro's head carved in black marble than in white."

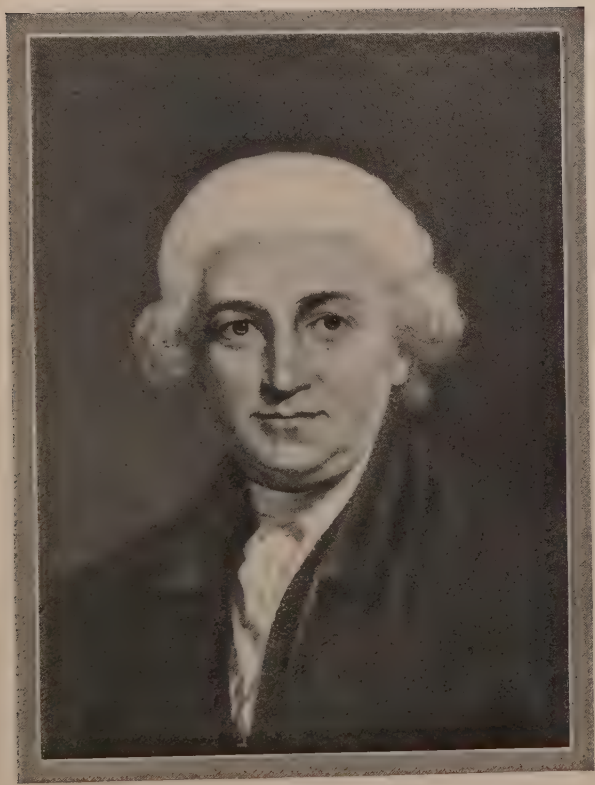
The Soliloquy and "Aside."— For a precisely similar reason, the soliloquy, so popular in the Shakespearian

drama, does not meet with general favor among modern playwrights. And the same may be said of the old-fashioned "aside."

Substitution of Action for Soliloquy.—An interesting substitution of "action" for verbal soliloquy is found in *Her Own Way* by Clyde Fitch. When the curtain rises on the last act of this play, the heroine is discovered seated at the piano playing Schumann's *Traümergei*. At the close of the preceding act she has received news of her lover's death, and after the first poignant pangs of grief have subsided, her sorrow finds tangible expression through the medium of music. It is a tremendously effective bit of realism, and speaks to the average playgoer much more eloquently than words.

The Value of Music and Light.—Augustus Thomas gives us a very clever exposition of the dramatic value of color in his play *The Harvest Moon*. Indeed, from time immemorial, music and light have been recognized by play producers as important factors in stimulating the emotion. "Certainly Shakespeare knew what he was about," says Belasco, "when he placed his scene between Romeo and Juliet on the balcony in the soft rays of the moon."

Unfortunately, stage managers and dramatists have not always adopted the Shakespearian method of introducing this emotional stimulus. Incidental music from the orchestra pit and red fire from the wings were popular in melodrama a generation ago, and it did not matter



DAVID GARRICK

that these effects were utterly irrelevant to the play itself, so long as a dramatic situation was apparently heightened thereby.

The Natural Introduction of Music and Light. - But the more artistic playwrights of our own time, following the lead of Shakespeare, strive to secure the benefit of these artificial devices in natural ways. They therefore introduce music, when desired, as an essential feature of their plots, while moonlight, sunrise, sunset, etc., are natural channels through which the requisite light effects may be obtained.

In Charles Klein's admirable play *The Music Master*, the most delicate musical illusion is produced by the practicing of the master's symphony in an adjoining room, the symphony itself playing a vital part in the development of the story. A like purpose is served by Pietro's composition *The Song of the Soul* in Edward Locke's *The Climax*, and by Arany's piano solos in Leo Ditrichstein's version of Herman Bahr's *The Concert*. The glow of dawn lends color to the closing scene of *Ghosts*, and it is a bit of dramatic economy worth noting that the first outward symptom of Oswald's shattered intellect is his request to be given the sun.

Noise, Tumult, and Commotion. - In like manner, the crash of thunder, the rattle of artillery, the clatter of horses' hoofs, the roar of the mob, etc., are effective methods of extracting dramatic value from noise, tumult or commotion.

Analogy Between Natural Phenomena and Human Passion.—Moreover, the analogy between natural phenomena and the stress of human passion is often most effectively utilized.

“Nor Heaven nor Earth have been at peace to-night,” declares Cæsar as the hour of his assassination approaches.

Macbeth, fresh from the murder of Duncan, exclaims:

“I have done the deed. Didst thou not hear a noise ?

Whereupon Lady Macbeth replies:

“I heard the owl scream and the crickets cry.”

Says Lennox:

“The night has been unruly; where we lay,

Our chimneys were blown down. . . .

Some say the earth

Was feverous and did shake.”

In *King Lear*, the tempest of human emotion reaches its culmination in the madness of the king, and the psychic storm which shakes the old monarch finds its parallel in the raging of the elements.

Use of Natural Phenomena to Evoke Sympathy and Intensify the Climax.—Dramatic literature of a more recent period is replete with similar situations. “The Girl of the Golden West” in a very whirlwind of passion turns the “road-agent” out of her cabin into the blizzard. Similarly, Dame Van Winkle, with a torrent of vituperation, consigns the long-suffering Rip to the fury of the storm.

In each of these instances it will be observed that the introduction of natural phenomena serves both to excite

the sympathy of the audience and to intensify the dramatic climax.

The Humanizing Process.— The dramatist who strives sincerely to hold the mirror up to nature, realizing that in life few persons are utterly bad, frequently endeavors to counteract the influence of any unattractive qualities which his characters may possess by bestowing upon them other nobler attributes, or by placing them in situations which have a tendency to awaken the pity and compassion of an audience.

This humanizing process is strikingly exemplified in the character of Shylock, whose repellant personality is appreciably softened by his love for Jessica, his domestic trouble, and the ill treatment to which he, as a representative Jew, is continually subjected.

So, also, the inveterate good nature of Rip Van Winkle contrasted with the vitriolic temper of his spouse, his affection for the village children, and his attachment to his dog, serve to transform the drunken vagabond into a wondrously lovable being.

Even so inhuman a wretch as Gloucester in Shakespeare's *Richard III* possesses a few admirable qualities, such as physical bravery and intellectual power. Indeed, in portraying this character, Shakespeare has employed the humanizing method so far as is consistent with the delineation of an utterly heartless monster of villainy and crime. Gloucester's very physical deformity, repulsive as it is, offers some slight excuse for his malevolence. Feeling that his misshapen body is some-

how responsible for his depraved mind, we are inclined to pity him when he thus bitterly describes himself:

“Cheated of feature by dissembling nature,
Deform’d, unfinished, sent before my time
Into this breathing world, scarce half made up,
And that so lamely and unfashionable
That dogs bark at me as I halt by them.”

Preparation for Improbable Events by Anticipatory Allusion. — A dramatic event in itself incredulous or fanciful is given the semblance of reality by natural allusions or explanations made in anticipation of its approach. It is somewhat improbable that the young men in Goldsmith’s comedy *She Stoops to Conquer* should have mistaken Hardcastle’s house for an inn, yet the mistake does not seem altogether unnatural when we have been prepared for it by such speeches as that of Mrs. Hardcastle at the very beginning of the play, when she exclaims: “Here we live in an old rumbling mansion, that looks for all the world like an inn.”

After Tony Lumpkin is described by Hardcastle as “a mere composition of tricks and mischief,” we are not surprised at the prank which he plays upon young Marlow and Hastings, while the prank itself affords reasonable occasion for the ludicrous situations which follow. We are prepared too for the greatest “mistake of the night,” Marlow’s belief that Kate is a bar-maid, by several anticipatory hints, the first of which is given by Kate herself upon her entrance, when she answers Hardcastle’s criticism of her appearance with these words:

"You know our agreement, sir. You allow me the morning to receive and pay visits, and to dress in my own manner; and in the evening I put on my housewife's dress to please you."

Shakespeare's plays abound in subtle touches of a like character, an interesting example of which occurs in *Twelfth Night*. Viola, separated from her brother by shipwreck, is left without protection in an unknown land. Having reason to believe that her brother is still alive, she naturally wishes to remain in the country till news of him can be obtained. Inclined at first to seek the assistance of the Countess Olivia, she is told that this "virtuous maid," because of a recent bereavement has "abjured company," and "will admit no kind of suit." The country is governed by Duke Orsino, in whom Viola's interest is aroused from the fact that she remembers to have heard her father "name him." But Orsino is a "bachelor," and she cannot with propriety present herself at his court. This state of affairs is adroitly set forth in the dialogue of the second scene, and so deftly is the way made ready for its approach, that Viola's determination to don boy's attire and enter the service of the Duke, so far from presenting a fantastic and improbable aspect, seems not only plausible but obvious.

Similarly, in *The Merchant of Venice* Antonio's losses are foreshadowed almost from the start, and in the earlier scenes of Sardou's *Diplomacy* the great French dramatist, by repeated natural references to the pungent odor of the perfume which the Countess affects, skilfully

prepares his audience for the somewhat fanciful rôle which this perfume later plays in untangling the dramatic mystery.

Natural Introduction of Implements Which Later Are to Serve a Dramatic Purpose.—Where the use of implements is necessary at some crisis in a play, dramatic artists are careful to introduce such implements in a natural manner. The pistols which play so sanguinary a part in *Hedda Gabler* are described in the first act as having once belonged to Hedda's father, and as used by Hedda to "amuse" herself. The revolver with which Colonel Schwartz threatens his daughter, in the last act of Sudermann's *Magda*, is brought naturally into the scene by Colonel Schwartz when he declares his intention of fighting Magda's betrayer.

In *The Mummy and the Humming Bird*, Giuseppe tells his story with the aid of the syphon, the decanter, and the broken plate — objects which have a natural place at the supper which Giuseppe is asked to share. The ivory tusk with which Clay Whipple, in *The Witching Hour*, kills the young man who maddens him with the cat's-eye jewel is a part of the furnishings of Brookfield's library, and is first called to the attention of the audience by being brushed accidentally from the table by Mrs. Whipple, and afterwards picked up from the floor by Brookfield, who fingers it nervously for a few moments before restoring it to its former position where it is ready for Whipple's hand at the critical instant.

Recapitulation.—The masters of dramatic art seek to eliminate from their work, so far as possible, all appearance of artificiality, and they attain this result through careful attention to details. Characters do not appeal to an audience as human unless they talk naturally, and have the “elements so mix’d” in them that they are neither paragons of virtue nor ogres of vice; light, music, and tumult possess true dramatic value only when woven into the very warp and woof of the play itself; situations intrinsically unreal become more plausible when anticipated by natural explanations or allusions, and instrumentalities which serve a purpose at crucial moments seem less miraculously at hand if they have been previously introduced in a natural fashion, — in short, the well-constructed drama is logical, not only in its portrayal of character, but in the concatenation of circumstances which comprise its plot.

ECONOMY
RETENTION OF INTEREST

CHAPTER V

ECONOMY AND RETENTION OF INTEREST

Economy Applied to Characters, Objects, and Events—Contrast and Conflict as Dramatic Principles—Popular Appeal in the Choice and Treatment of the Theme—The Importance of Action—The Duty of Playgoers to Dramatist and Actors.

Dramatic Economy.—In a limited sense, the playwright who practices strict dramatic economy does not depict with absolute fidelity the actual conditions of human existence, since there are countless daily occurrences in the life of every individual which seem to have little, if any, structural significance in the life drama for which he is cast. Yet, in a broader sense, the dramatist who binds his situations together with the mighty chain of cause and effect, carefully selecting the essential and rejecting the non-essential, tacitly recognizes that Nature is the great economist, and that every human event, however trivial, has its place in the great economic scheme of things.

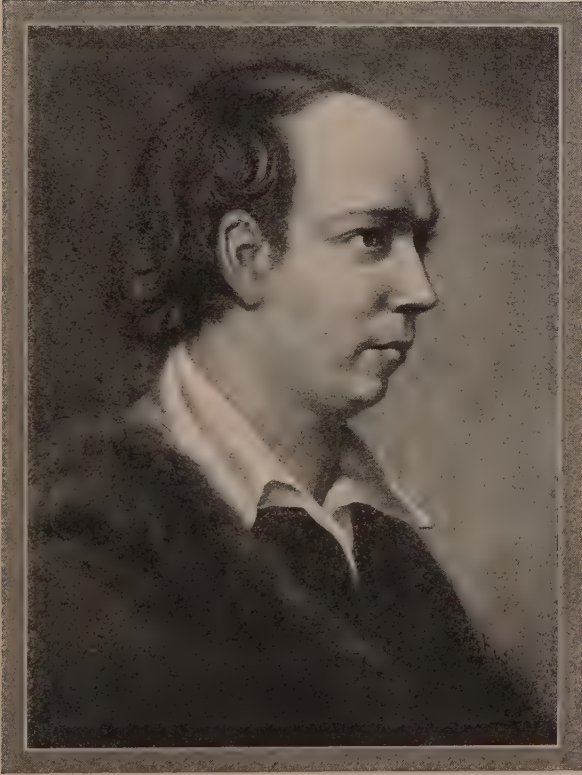
In short, his aim is to reveal the principles of truth which underlie human endeavor rather than to picture with photographic nicety the mere external manifestations of life. He presupposes some imaginative faculty on the part of his hearers, and exclaims with Shakespeare: "The best in its kind are but shadows; and the worst are no worse, if imagination amend them."

The following are a few examples of the way in which the great principle of economy has been practised in dramatic construction:

Economy in Characters.—Economy in the use of characters is peculiarly essential where the exigencies of plot development require the weaving together of two or more distinct stories. Thus, in *The Merchant of Venice*, the story of the bond is connected with the tale of the caskets by the single character Bassanio, whose fortunes ultimately involve all the characters of the former story until both are completely fused in the trial scene.

Economy in the Use of Objects.—*The Merchant of Venice* also furnishes an excellent example of economy in the introduction of objects. The story of the rings is utilized as a means of revealing to Bassanio the identity of Portia, thereby avoiding an abrupt and undramatic explanation. At the same time, the episode serves to conceal the improbability of Portia's disguise by diverting attention at a moment when the impossibility of her undertaking would otherwise be most apparent. Furthermore, the story of the rings tends to disclose the lighter side of Portia's character, and to test both the love and friendship of Bassanio.

Economy in Marshaling Events.—Economy in the marshaling of dramatic events is well exemplified in *Richard III*, where one crime grows naturally out of



OLIVER GOLDSMITH

another without apparent design on the part of Gloucester.

Irony and Economy.— A humorous or ironic situation is frequently heightened by the employment of some economic device, as, for example, in Gilbert and Sullivan's *Pinafore*, where the argument with which Sir Joseph seeks to justify his proposed marriage with Josephine — "love levels all ranks" — is the very argument which finally induces Josephine to bestow her hand upon a common sailor.

The Practical Side of Dramatic Economy.— The playwright must tell his story within the three hours or less which the theatre allots him, and tell it usually to an audience of widely varying tastes, sympathies, and intelligence, whose attention he must capture at the start and retain to the end. In this he is not likely to succeed unless he has the courage to discard all lines, characters, or situations (however meritorious in themselves) which tend to impede the direct advancement of his plot. Says Marguerite Merington: "Every word, essential gesture, expressive silence, devised by the playwright, must find its motive in the psychic essence of the part, must tend to some definite dramatic end in the structure of the play."

Even characters whose presence is important in creating a desired atmosphere ought to serve some additional purpose. In *Julius Cæsar*, the Soothsayer not only constitutes a significant detail in the picture of Roman

life, but affords a medium through which may be given an anticipatory hint of Cæsar's impending doom.

Contrast.— Contrast is a powerful weapon in the hand of the play-builder. The success of that class of plays of which *The Prisoner of Zenda* is a notable type is due in no small degree to the fact that the practical, prosaic characters of our own time are placed in a dramatic environment replete with the customs and ideals of a romantic age.

The comparison of country life with city life forms the basis of many humorous situations in popular rural plays, such as *The Old Homestead* and *The Rejuvenation of Aunt Mary*. The calm and nonchalant demeanor of Travers, the imperturbable clubman, in opposition to the hysterical conduct of the South American revolutionists is responsible for much of the wholesome fun which pervades Richard Harding Davis's farcical play *The Dictator*.

Contrast in the Shakespearian Drama.— Shakespeare's plays are filled with contrasted individuals, groups, and situations. A few examples will suffice. In *The Merchant of Venice*, Shylock the Jew is contrasted with Antonio the Gentile; the sprightliness of Launcelot with the infirmity of Gobbo. In *Twelfth Night*, the feminine timidity with which Viola faces Sir Andrew's sword is offset by the masculine force with which Sebastian repulses Sir Andrew. In *Julius Cæsar*, the calm, dispassionate, clear-cut oration of Brutus to the

Roman people is followed by the sagacious, insinuating address of Antony.

Contrast by the Introduction of Verse, Song, or Melody.— The playwright frequently secures a pleasing contrast by the introduction of some well-known poem, song, or melody, which, if relevant to the plot, serves the double purpose of graceful explanation and popular appeal. This is especially true of the Bret Harte verses which are introduced with such telling effect by Augustus Thomas in *The Witching Hour*.

Dramatic Conflict.— Conflict is still another important attribute of a successful play. We find it exemplified crudely in the physical contest of the hero and villain of the sensational melodrama; picturesquely, in the stage duel of the so-called romantic drama; with psychic appeal, in plays like *The Witching Hour*; and subtly, in the clash of wits which characterizes such comedies as *Lady Frederick*.

The play is very like a game after all, and much of the enjoyment we derive from witnessing a dramatic performance lies in the fact that we sympathize with the hero and heroine who are striving to attain happiness. We make their contest our own, applauding their triumphs when they succeed, or weeping furtively when the "game" goes against them.

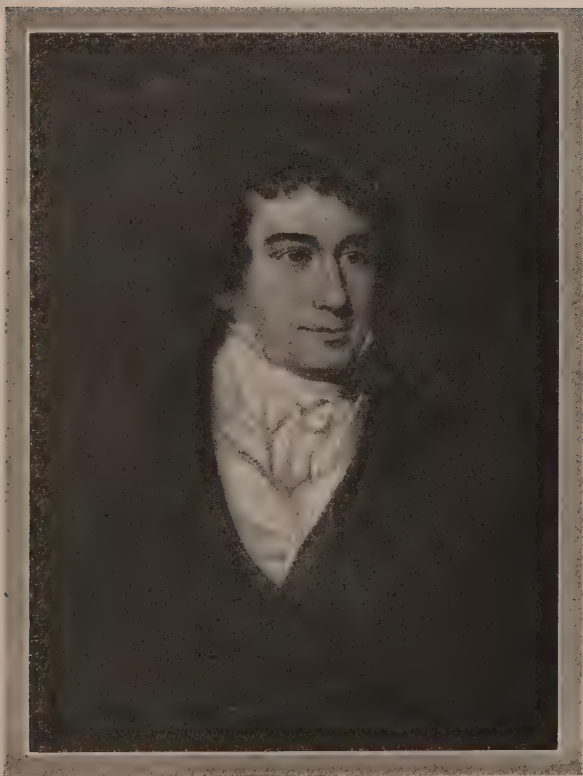
The "Journalistic Drama."— This suggests the indisputable fact that the successful dramatist always under-

stands the psychology of his audience. The vogue of that class of plays which Montrose J. Moses terms "sheer journalism" is by no means accidental. The magazines and daily papers exploit the themes which catch the fancy of the people, and the play-builder is astute who caters to a taste already developed and fostered by journalistic literature. As proof of this assertion, witness the popularity of the drama of "high finance," of which Charles Klein's *The Lion and the Mouse* and *The Gamblers* are conspicuous examples.

Ibsen and the Newspapers.— It has been said of Ibsen that he "drew from newspapers most of the raw material for his incomparable dramas," that "newspapers gave him much of his knowledge of human nature and of the world," that "he would spend hours in reading them from beginning to end," and that "he accumulated thousands of clippings on all imaginable phases of life."

The Importance of the Opening Scene.— An eminent educator was wont to declare that the public speaker who wishes the immediate attention of his hearers can best secure it by stating his fundamental proposition at the outset in startling terms. This rule is equally applicable to the playwright, who should never forget that the setting and opening of his first act are all important.

Clyde Fitch recognized this necessity, and was especially adept in selecting for his first scene both a setting and a situation of unusual interest. The school-room



EDMUND KEAN

scene in *Nathan Hale*, the nursery scene in *Her Own Way*, and the lodging-room scene in *Girls* are apt illustrations.

The Audience Must Share the Secret.— It is also to be borne in mind in the treatment of a given theme that playgoers resent all attempts to mystify them. The novelist may reserve a surprise to the last, but the playwright must permit his audience a glimpse of the real situation. This fact is set forth convincingly by Professor Matthews in his interesting and valuable work *A Study of the Drama*. It is also referred to by Esenwein in his analysis of *The Ransom of Red Chief* by O. Henry (*Studying the Short-Story*)* when he calls attention to “the stage trick of a character in ignorance while the audience enjoys his delusion.”

A Picture Play.— The distinction between the dramatic and novelistic treatment is happily illustrated by a little moving-picture drama which was popular a few years ago.

A child is represented as imprisoned beneath a large bandbox, which has accidentally fallen from a table near which the child has been playing. The parents search in vain for the child. Gypsies have been in the vicinity, and they are suspected of having had a hand in the disappearance. A spirited race to overtake the gypsies ensues. There are all sorts of complications. But at intervals throughout the portrayal of the parents' frenzied hunt, the scene is shifted back to the home, where

*Hinds Noble & Eldredge, New York, \$1.25.

the spectators are shown the bandbox rocked to and fro by the little prisoner's endeavors to extricate himself.

Finally, the child becomes exhausted, and desists momentarily from his efforts. The parents return in despair. The father sits with bowed head and downcast eyes, when suddenly he notices that the overturned bandbox is actually moving. At first, he is terrified, but soon regains his courage, and lifting the box from the floor, discloses to view the long lost child.

The story writer might have withheld from his readers all knowledge of the child's whereabouts, and made them parties in the father's discovery. Not so with the dramatist: he must allow his audience to share the secret, to participate in the game. The appeal of this little kinetoscopic drama lay in creating a suspense on the part of the spectators, who were all eagerly waiting to see when and how the parents would find out what they (the spectators) already knew. There is a better reason than is sometimes imagined for calling a dramatic performance a "play."

The Importance of Action. — The efficient playwright never permits himself to disregard the axiom that in the drama action is indispensable. By action is meant energy exhibited in outward motion as opposed to the mere recitation of dialogue. While it is true that dramatists like Ibsen have been able to imbue commonplace conversation with life, yet an examination of their works will reveal the fact that words are usually incident to

deeds, and though the action may be temporarily submerged, it springs to the surface in climactic moments with a force and intensity which is all the more significant because of the contrast.

To test a given play, let the student ask this question: Could the story be adequately told by a series of moving pictures? If the answer is no, then he may rest assured that the work is not a drama in any real or vital sense.

A Note of Caution.— The foregoing pages have dealt with the drama on its structural side exclusively. At this point a word of caution seems advisable. Canons of art and rules of construction are vastly important as means to an end: they are never an end in themselves. To become a vital thing the skeleton of dramatic form should be invested with the flesh and blood of substance. The play that lives must be endowed with heart and mind and soul.

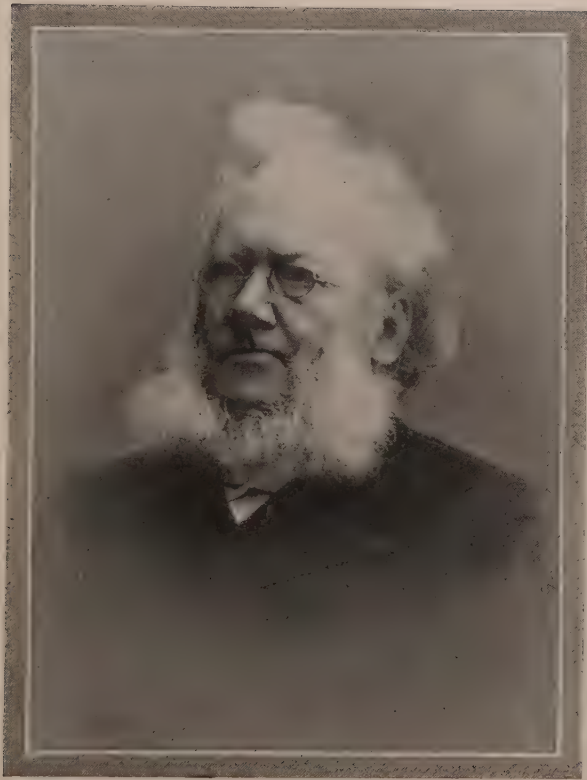
And just as in human life there is a beauty of spirit which transcends mere physical attractiveness, so in the realm of art a message is sometimes spoken which in the form of its utterance violates prescribed laws, and at the same time possesses a splendor all its own, a grandeur that defies analysis. If a play grips us, if it teaches a great truth impressively, if it stirs our emotions, if it incites us to laughter, or moves us to tears, it has perhaps fulfilled its dramatic mission even though its technique may fall far short of accepted standards.

The theatre is literally a "playhouse," and it is a duty we owe not only to ourselves but to dramatist and actors

to enter it not with a critical, fault-finding spirit, but with something of the imagination and receptivity of childhood. Knowledge of dramatic mechanism ought not to mar our enjoyment, nor dim the theatrical illusion, provided we are careful always to remember that the drama could never have become the vital, growing force it is to-day were the rules of its construction rigid and inelastic. The finest imagination is that which is controlled by intelligence, and the playgoer who is tempted to overestimate the importance of conformity to artistic law will find it salutary to recall the fact that Shakespeare scorned to be a slave to classical tradition, and that Wagner in the composition of his great music-dramas discarded the shackles of conventionality.

Summary.— The attention of the audience can rarely be retained without a strict observance of dramatic economy. Contrast and conflict are potent methods of securing interest; the choice of the theme is important, and in its treatment the sagacious playwright recognizes the fact that playgoers delight to participate in the game and to share the dramatic secret.

Succeeding Chapters.— A diagram embodying the principles enumerated in the preceding pages comprises the chapter which follows, and in order to illustrate the method of analysis under this diagram, four plays have been selected for examination — Shakespeare's *As You Like It* and *Othello*, Ibsen's *A Doll's House*, and Maeterlinck's *Mary Magdalene*.



HENRIK IBSEN

AN
ANALYTICAL DIAGRAM

CHAPTER VI

AN ANALYTICAL DIAGRAM

I. UNITIES.

1. Time.
 - (a) Explanation of prior occurrences.
2. Place.
3. Action.

II. PLOT.

1. Source.
 - (a) Original.
 - (b) Borrowed.
2. Form.
 - (a) Simple.
 - (b) Complex.
3. Development.
 - (a) Arch-like.
 - (b) Catastrophic.

III. DETAILED TREATMENT.

- A. Methods of securing naturalness.
 1. Vehicle of expression.
 - (a) Prose.
 - (b) Verse.
 - (c) Dialect.
 2. Soliloquies and "asides."
 - (a) Absence of
 - (b) Presence of
 3. Natural introduction of emotional stimuli.
 - (a) Light.
 - (b) Music.

- (c) Tumult.
- (d) Noise.
- (e) Natural phenomena.
- 4. Humanizing process.
 - (a) Personal qualities of characters.
 - (b) Circumstances.
- 5. Anticipation.
 - (a) Of incredulous events.
 - (b) Of use of implements or objects..
- B. Methods of securing interest of audience.
 - 1. Economy.
 - (a) In the introduction of characters.
 - (b) In the use of objects.
 - (c) In the marshalling of events.
 - 2. Contrast.
 - (a) In the grouping of characters and events.
 - (b) In the vehicle of expression.
 - 3. Conflict.
 - (a) Mental.
 - (b) Physical.
 - 4. Appeal to popular taste.
 - (a) In the choice of the theme.
 - (b) In the treatment of the theme.



EDWIN BOOTH

ANALYSIS OF
"AS YOU LIKE IT"

CHAPTER VII

ANALYSIS* OF "AS YOU LIKE IT"

In this chapter and in the three which succeed it, the topics are numbered and lettered with reference to the DIAGRAM on pages 41-42.

I.—UNITIES

1. The play does not conform to the unity of time.

(a) The first scene is, in the main, devoted to an explanation of events which have occurred prior to the action of the play.

2. Sixteen of the twenty-two scenes are laid in the forest of Arden, and the remaining scenes are located either at Oliver's house or Duke Frederick's palace.

3. Unity of action is not strictly observed. Nevertheless there is perfect unity of tone and feeling.

II.—PLOT

1. (b) It has been suggested that the plot of *As You Like It* was derived from two sources — *Rosalind: Euphues' Golden Legacy*, a novel by Thomas Lodge, and *The Cook's Tale of Gamelyn*, supposed at one time to have been written by Chaucer, but not now included in his works. Since, however, *The Cook's*

* Based on "An Analytical Diagram"

Tale of Gamelyn was not printed in Shakespeare's lifetime, his familiarity with it has been doubted.

2. (b) The plot is complex, comprising four love episodes besides the contest between the Dukes and that between Oliver and Orlando.

3. (a) The arch-like method of plot development is employed, the pivotal point being in the centre of the play (Act III, Scene II) when Orlando meets Rosalind in disguise.

III.—DETAILED TREATMENT

A.—Methods of Securing Naturalness.

1. (a) Prose and (b) blank verse are commingled, the larger portion of the play being in prose.

2. (b) The soliloquies are few and short. In Act III, Scene III, there are a few "asides."

3. (b) Vocal music is introduced naturally as the spontaneous expression of the characters.

(c) The shouting incidental to the wrestling match is a natural means of introducing emotional stimulus.

4 (a) We find a humanizing touch in Duke Frederick's love for Celia. All the characters, especially Oliver, become more sympathetic when brought in contact with the magic of the forest.

(b) That Rosalind should not attempt sooner to reveal her identity to her father is unfilial. In order to make her remissness pardonable, the love affair which detains her should be of unusual piquancy and charm; and in the game she plays with Orlando we have just the sort of situation to capture our sympathies and make us exceedingly lenient toward her faults.



MAETERLINCK

5. (a) The masquerade of Rosalind is frankly anticipated at the close of Act I.

B.—Methods of Securing Interest of Audience.

1. (a) The banished Duke is the magnet which draws all characters, directly or indirectly, to the forest. Rosalind goes there to seek him, and Celia and Touchstone accompany her. Orlando, seeking food for Adam, interrupts the feast of the Duke and his followers, and after revealing his identity, remains as a welcome guest. Rosalind's interest in "the wrestler" arouses Frederick's suspicion that Rosalind and Celia have fled with Orlando. He therefore commands Oliver to seek his brother and "bring him dead or living." Oliver is rescued from death by Orlando in the forest, and brought by him to the banished Duke. He is then sent with a message to Ganymede from the wounded Orlando, and meeting Celia, falls in love with her. Frederick makes ready an expedition against the banished Duke, but after reaching the "skirts" of the wood, is "converted both from his enterprise and from the world," the tidings being brought to the Duke by Jaques de Boys.

(b) The papers containing verses which Orlando hangs upon the trees are an economical as well as an artistic means of acquainting Ganymede with the fact that Orlando loves Rosalind. The chain which Rosalind presents to Orlando in Act I affords an opportunity for Celia to tell Rosalind of Orlando's presence in the forest in a dramatic manner.

(c) Out of the wrestling match much of the subse-

quent action is naturally evolved. Orlando's victory enrages Oliver and makes necessary Orlando's flight; it awakens Rosalind's interest in "the wrestler," and her interest leads Frederick to suspect that Orlando has had a hand in the disappearance of Celia and Rosalind. Similarly, the unmasking of Rosalind restores to the banished Duke his daughter, and gives Phebe a husband and Orlando a wife.

2. (a) The play abounds in happy contrasts. The characters are exceedingly varied: Duke, jester, wrestler, vicar, shepherds, courtiers, country people, pages, foresters, etc. The complexity of court life is placed in opposition to the simple life of the forest. Three types of humor are contrasted, designated by Professor Moulton as "the healthy humor of Rosalind, the professional humor of Touchstone, and the morbid humor of Jaques." Rosalind and Orlando, Touchstone and Audry, Silvius and Phebe, Oliver and Celia, are contrasted both as types of lovers and in the methods of their wooing.

(b) Prose, verse, and song are blended and contrasted in the most delightful fashion.

3. (a) There is a conflict between the Dukes, and between Orlando and Oliver. Rosalind during her masquerade is playing a game; and Jaques and Touchstone welcome every opportunity to match wits with any and all comers.

(b) In the first scene, Orlando lays hands upon Oliver. In the wrestling match there is actual physical conflict, which has structural significance from the fact that Charles is the representative of Oliver in the struggle.

In Act II, Scene VII, Orlando demands food at the point of the sword.

4. (a) All the world loves a fairy tale, and *As You Like It*, with its magical forest peopled with impossible lions and conventional shepherds, with its atmosphere of playfulness and its extravagantly happy ending, is just the sort of play to appeal to popular taste in all ages.

(b) The audience shares the secret of Rosalind's disguise, and enters heartily into the game with her.

ANALYSIS OF
"OTHELLO"

CHAPTER VIII

ANALYSIS* OF "OTHELLO"

I.—UNITIES

1. Unity of time is disregarded.

(a) The first act partaking somewhat of the nature of a prologue, there are few prior events which it is necessary to relate. Cassio's preferment, Roderigo's interest in Desdemona, and the elopement of Desdemona and Othello are explained briefly in the first scene. The wooing of Desdemona is described by Othello himself in his speech to the Duke and Senators in the third scene.

2. The first act is laid in Venice; all the others, at a seaport in Cyprus.

3. The essential elements of unity of action are observed.

II.—PLOT

1. (b) The plot is adapted from a story by Giraldi Cinthio, an Italian novelist. It is a "meagre tale," and none of the characters in the story, except Desdemona, are given names.

2. (a) Though combining several intrigues, the plot is relatively simple.

3. (a) The plot is manipulated on the regular "rise and fall" principle. The descent begins in the third

*Based on "An Analytical Diagram," page 41.

scene of the central act when Othello commences to credit Iago's insinuations regarding the infidelity of Desdemona.

III.—DETAILED TREATMENT

A.—*Methods of Securing Naturalness.*

1. (a) Prose is employed in several instances, but (b) blank verse and rhyme predominate.

2. (b) Iago indulges in several long soliloquies which acquaint the audience with the malignity of his purposes. There are also various other soliloquies, as well as "asides".

3. (a) There are several night scenes with faint light or flickering torches to give naturally a background of weird or sombre color to the tragedy.

(b) The song of Iago in the third scene of the second act, the playing of the musicians at the opening of Act III, and the song of Desdemona in the last scene of Act IV are examples of the natural introduction of music.

Various trumpet calls announcing the arrival of characters help to create a military atmosphere.

(c) Tumult and (d) noise are naturally introduced by the shouting and the guns preceding Othello's entrance in Act II.

4. (a) Iago possesses soldierly qualities, and is intellectually strong.

The simplicity of Othello's nature makes us more willing to forgive his gullibility.

The weakness of Cassio's character as revealed in the scene of his intoxication helps to explain his willingness to have Desdemona intercede for him.

(b) Iago's conduct seems a trifle more human when we learn that Othello has refused to make him his lieutenant, and that he suspects the Moor has had a *liaison* with his wife.

Desdemona's interest in Othello appears much less abnormal after the Moor has made his defence to the Duke and Senators. The further fact that none of the other characters in the play are at all worthy of her contributes to the same end.

5. (a) The preparation for Iago's intrigue against Othello begins as early as the seventh line of the play, when Roderigo says to Iago:

"Thou told'st me thou didst hold him in thy hate."

Othello's belief in Desdemona's faithlessness is anticipated when Brabantio speaks his parting words near the close of Act I:

"Look to her Moor, if thou hast eyes to see;
She has deceiv'd her father, and may thee."

The jealousy of Othello will appear more probable if the man of action is placed where there is nothing to prevent his brooding over the first crafty suggestion of Iago. He is therefore sent on the expedition to Cyprus, and the sudden wreck of the Turkish fleet leaves him there without martial occupation. Domestic tragedy is thus anticipated.

Desdemona's death is foreshadowed by her song in the last scene of Act IV.

The soliloquies of Iago prepare the audience for much of the succeeding action.

(b) The handkerchief is introduced in a natural manner by Desdemona when she wishes to bind Othello's forehead in the third scene of Act III.

B.—Methods of Securing Interest of Audience.

1. (a) Cassio is the instrument by which Iago effects his designs. The quarrel of Cassio in the third scene of the second act leads to the loss of his office, and Desdemona's entreaties in his behalf help to confirm Othello's suspicions of her infidelity. Cassio's relations with Bianca still further confirm these suspicions by affording a natural means of exhibiting the handkerchief to Othello, and by furnishing a topic of conversation (Act IV, Scene I) which Othello misinterprets as referring to Desdemona.

(b) The handkerchief not only strengthens Othello in his unfounded belief in Desdemona's perfidy, but connects Bianca with the other characters, and is responsible for the ironical situation in the fourth scene of Act III, when Desdemona insists that the Moor's interest in the loss of the handkerchief is but a trick to keep her from pleading Cassio's cause.

(c) The advancement of Cassio to the lieutenantcy arouses Iago's jealousy, and it is Iago's machinations that direct the trend of the plot. Being thus directed, the plot seems less like the artificial creation of the playwright.

Othello's defence in the last scene of the first act has economic value, since it serves to relate a prior

occurrence, makes Desdemona's love for the Moor seem more probable, and bridges over the time that must elapse in summoning Desdemona.

2.(a) The simplicity of Othello is contrasted with the craftiness of Iago; the virtue of Desdemona and Emilia, with the wantonness of Bianca; the gentleness of Desdemona, with the martial qualities of the Moor. In the second scene of Act I, the rage of Brabantio is met with the calmness of Othello. The playfulness of the clown at the opening of the fourth scene in Act III is succeeded by the grim seriousness of the Moor. The blunt accusation of Othello in the second scene of Act IV is followed by the refined delicacy of Desdemona's question to Iago, when she is unwilling to speak the name the Moor has applied to her.

(b) Rhyme, blank verse, and song are mingled.

3. (a) There is the struggle of Iago to compass his evil designs; the struggle of Cassio to regain his office, and the ironical struggle of Desdemona to regain it for him; the struggle of Bianca to retain Cassio's affection; the inward conflict of Othello with his suspicions of Desdemona, and his outward struggle to prove her guilt; the short conflict of Iago with Emilia near the close of the play; and the pursuit of Desdemona by Roderigo.

(b) There is physical conflict between the followers of Othello and those of Brabantio, Act I, Scene II; the quarrels of Cassio, Act II, Scene III, and Act V, Scene I; the physical violence of Desdemona's death, and the suicide of Othello.

4. (a) The marriage of the Moor and Desdemona is

in itself sufficiently startling to attract the attention of the audience at once.

(b) No effort is spared to give the audience full knowledge of Iago's villainy. The interest of the audience is sustained by watching the ensnarement of Othello, and wondering when and how he will discover the true character of Iago.

The first act opens strikingly with the abrupt announcement to Brabantio of his daughter's elopement.



EDWIN FORREST

ANALYSIS OF
"A DOLL'S HOUSE"

CHAPTER IX

ANALYSIS* OF "A DOLL'S HOUSE"

I.— UNITIES

1. The action takes place on three consecutive days.
 - (a) The dialogue of Mrs. Linden and Nora, and Krogstad and Nora, in Act I, familiarizes the audience with what has transpired before the action of the play.
2. Unity of place is strictly observed.
3. The play conforms to the unity of action sufficiently, although the character of Dr. Rank contributes little to the advancement of the plot.

II.— PLOT

1. (a) The plot is original and (2a) simple.
3. (b) The catastrophic method of plot development is employed. "Nothing can involve Nora in deeper embarrassment than what has already happened" when the curtain rises.

III. —DETAILED TREATMENT

A.— Methods of Securing Naturalness.

1. (a) Prose is the vehicle of expression.
2. (b) There are several speeches which are not addressed to any of the characters.

*Based on "An Analytical Diagram," page 41.

3. (b) The music of the piano in Act II is naturally introduced. The dance music in Act III is heard from outside, and is the natural accompaniment to the dance which is going on in the room above.

(c) The shouting and merriment of the children in the game with Nora serve to heighten the dramatic effect and throw light on Nora's character.

(d) The reverberation of the door closing at the end of the play is an effective method of expressing the force and irrevocability of Nora's decision.

4. (a) In all the principal characters virtues and faults are commingled.

(b) Nora's desertion of her husband and children to be received sympathetically must appear to be justified by some circumstance other than her desire to "educate" herself. This is found in the conduct of Torvald toward Nora's forgery.

5. (a) Nora's indebtedness is anticipated early in Act I by the reference to her need of money in her dialogue with Torvald. Nora's abandonment of her children is anticipated at the beginning of Act II in the dialogue between Nora and Anna.

(b) The domino which Nora throws round her in Act III is brought naturally into the scene by Torvald when he returns with Nora from the dance.

B.—Methods of Securing Interest of Audience.

1. (a) Dramatic economy is exemplified in the characters of Mrs. Linden and Krogstad. Mrs. Linden wishes to secure Krogstad's position, and Krogstad's

desire to retain his position precipitates the trouble between Nora and Torvald. The reconciliation of Mrs. Linden and Krogstad brings about the return of the promissory note, and that in turn reveals Helmer's character in such a light that Nora feels impelled to leave him.

(b) The Christmas-tree, besides serving its purpose in the action of the play, is also a symbol of Nora's life. The macaroons throw light upon both the character of Nora and that of Torvald.

(c) Helmer's new position gives impetus to all that follows. While it seems at first to solve Nora's difficulties, yet in reality it leads directly to the catastrophe by forcing Krogstad's hand, and bringing Mrs. Linden into the action.

2. (a) Nora's assumed gayety stands out in marked contrast to her real feelings. The character types are well contrasted. The tarantella is a bit of vivid color in somewhat dull surroundings — the passion of the South contrasted with the frigidity of the North.

3. (a) There is the outward struggle of Nora with Krogstad and Helmer, and the inner struggle of Nora with her own nature. There is the struggle of Krogstad to retain his position, and the struggle of Dr. Rank with his fatal disease.

4. (a) The problem of woman's development is always a popular theme.

(b) The play opens in an appealing manner with the Christmas-tree and basket of presents, the concealment of the macaroons, and the romping of Nora and the children.

ANALYSIS OF
"MARY MAGDALENE"

CHAPTER X

ANALYSIS* OF "MARY MAGDALENE"

I.— UNITIES

1. Unity of time is not observed.

(a) The early dialogue of Act I gives us glimpses of the past.

2. Unity of place is not observed.

3. The play conforms to the unity of action.

II.— PLOT

1. (b) The play is founded on the story of the Magdalene, and Maeterlinck acknowledges his indebtedness to Heyse's *Maria Von Magdala* for the idea of two situations, one at the close of the first act where Christ "stops the crowd raging against Mary Magdalene with these words, spoken behind the scenes: 'He that is without sin among you, let him cast the first stone';" the other in the third act where Mary has it in her power to save or destroy the Master "according as she consents or refuses to give herself to a Roman."

2. (a) The plot is simple.

3. (a) The pivotal point of the plot is to be found near the end of Act II, when Lazarus addresses Mary with the words: "Come. The Master calls you."

*Based on "An Analytical Diagram," page 41.

III.—DETAILED TREATMENT

A.—Methods of Securing Naturalness.

1. (a) Prose is the vehicle of expression.
2. (a) There are no soliloquies nor "asides."
3. (a) The red light at the end of the play is introduced naturally by the glare of the torches from without. In preparation for this, the lamps in the room are extinguished naturally at the suggestion of the Cripple, who fears detection by the mob.

(b) The "sound of the double flute" outside announces naturally the entrance of Mary Magdalene.

(c) Tumult, (d) noise, etc., are introduced naturally by the shouting of the mob, the sound of arms, horses, etc.

4. (a) The Roman characters are endowed with the usual Stoic virtues.

(b) The conduct of Verus, contemptible in itself, seems less reprehensible in view of the fact that he is a Roman, and as yet uninfluenced by the teachings of Christ.

5. (a) The attack of the mob upon Mary Magdalene at the end of Act I is anticipated by Mary herself, who relates how she had been previously insulted and threatened with stones; and also by Silanus when he says: "You know the Jewish fanaticism. . . . In these moments of exaltation, the most inoffensive become dangerous; and the sight of the Roman toga and arms enrages them strangely."

B.—Methods of Securing Interest of Audience.

1. (a) It is good dramatic economy which makes



SIDERMANN

Verus, the Roman soldier and lover of Mary Magdalene, the person who has it in his power to save Christ.

(c) The personality of Christ is the motive power which seems to direct Mary Magdalene's every act.

2. (a) The character types are of great diversity, especially in the last act. A sharp parallel is drawn between Pagan Philosophy and the Religion of Christ; the tumult of the mob is contrasted with the calm dignity of the Saviour's Voice; the rage of Verus and the panic of the cripples, with the quiet decision of Mary Magdalene.

3. (a) There is the struggle between Verus and Mary, and the inner struggle of Mary herself. In the background is the conflict waged against Christ.

(b) At the close of Act I we have the physical violence of the mob, which ceases at the sound of the Voice.

4. (a) The scriptural theme, with its familiar characters and scenes, has in itself an appealing power.

(b) The lavish setting of the opening scene, the reference to the Biblical characters near at hand, to the Parable of the Prodigal Son, etc., all tend to capture the attention of the audience at once.

“MISTRESS MOLLY”

CHAPTER XI

"MISTRESS MOLLY"

A Play With Marginal Annotations

INTRODUCTORY

In further exemplification of the dramatic principles already enumerated, the author has written the little play which follows, placing *analytical annotations in the margin*, each annotation being referred by number to its proper place in the DIAGRAM, page 41.

The author has made use of this play not because he labors under the delusion that it is of exceptional merit, but because he has endeavored, within the small compass of a single act, to follow most of the rules herein set forth.

For the particular annotative method adopted indebtedness is acknowledged to J. Berg Esenwein, who has utilized this system in the analysis of the stories collected in his entertaining and instructive work *Studying the Short-Story*.*

*Hinds Noble & Eldredge, New York, \$1.25.

"MISTRESS MOLLY"

MISTRESS MOLLY

A Patriotic Play in One Act

CHARACTERS

Captain Dorrington, a British officer.

Joe Fleming, a Colonial scout.

Corporal Hawkins, a British soldier.

Molly Temperton, a patriot.

British soldiers and American youths.

Place — A fort near Lake Champlain.

Time — Spring of 1775; midnight and early dawn.

SCENE.— *Interior of a fort. The walls of the scene are designed to represent rough stone. There are doors in the center and right walls, and a grated window, with window ledge, at right of center door. A table and chairs are placed at left of center, and on the table is a large*

*The numbers refer to the DIAGRAM
(pages 41-42.)*

III. B. 4 (a)

There is an appeal to popular taste in the choice of a patriotic theme.

III. B. 2 (a)

The characters are contrasted as far as possible.

I.

The unities are observed.

II. 1 (b)

The plot was suggested by the capture of Fort Ticonderoga.

old-fashioned candelabrum containing three lighted candles.

At rise of curtain, CAPTAIN DORRINGTON and CORPORAL HAWKINS are discovered, seated at the table. The latter is laboriously polishing the buttons of a British uniform. British soldiers are heard singing lustily outside.

III. A. 3 (b)
Natural introduction of vocal music.

Captain Dorrington. Deuce take the luck! One dies of stagnation here in these benighted colonies. Better be buried alive than garrisoned in a ramshackle old fortress in the heart of the wilderness. What say you, corporal?

III. A. 1 (a)
Prose is the vehicle of expression, an attempt being made to adopt the conversational style of the period.

Corporal Hawkins. Hit are wery trying, sir. Social diwersions are most hinfrequent hin Hamerica, and hour grandest uniforms 'ave no hattractions for these 'oydenish country girls.

III. A. 1 (c)
The Corporal speaks in dialect.

Captain. True; yet methinks these selfsame country maids would serve right royally to while away an idle hour. (*Rises and yawns.*) Heigh-ho! I'm weary of it all. Ten shillings, corporal, for the glimpse of a pretty girl to-night!

III. A. 5 (a)
Anticipation of a coming dramatic event. See annotation lettered "W."

Corporal. Taken, sir! 'Ow could you find a 'andsomer girl than 'er as brings us produce and prowisions from hacross the lake?

Captain (heartily). Faith, you couldn't! Her cheeks are pinker than the apple blossoms that revel in her gran'sir's garden, her eyes!—Ah, corporal, the waters of holy lake St. Sacrament itself are not so pure and limpid! Often have



SARAH BERNHARDT

I watched her through the glass. 'Tis a pretty sight. Right sturdily doth she pull an oar through the sea-green billows of old Champlain, and straight as a die doth she steer her little craft to the old red farmhouse on the eastern shore. She is late in coming to-night. 'Tis well nigh twelve o'clock already.

Corporal. She's wery cautious, sir. 'Twould never do to 'ave 'er neighbors learn 'ow cleverly she keeps a British fort supplied with fowls and wegetables. She'll come, never fear.

Captain (laughing). Yes; her venerable grandsire is far too penurious to renounce his nightly visit to a hungry garrison. (*Sound of laughter outside.*) Hark! What's that?

Corporal (rising). Hif I mistake not, hit's the little lady now. (*Listening.*) The boys are wery heager to see 'er this hevening.

(*The CAPTAIN seems lost in thought for a moment.*)

Captain (aside). Heavens! What a temptation! But where's the harm? As Hawkins says we have few diversions. (*Strikes table.*) By Jove, I'll do it! (*To CORPORAL.*) Corporal, when the little lady has sold her provisions, kindly ask her to step this way.

Corporal (with surprise). What! 'Ere hinside the fort, sir?

Captain (sharply). Yes. Why not? One must be amused, and the little country girl will not betray us. We have been careful to hide the true state of affairs from the enemy, and our weak-

I. 1 (a)

This and the next few speeches are explanatory of prior occurrences.

III. A. 3 (d)

Emotional stimulus of noise naturally introduced.

III. A. 2 (b)

"Asides" are used with greater freedom owing to the artificial nature of the romantic Colonial play.

III. A. 4 (b)

A humanizing touch — the tedium of his surroundings induces the Captain to pursue a questionable line of conduct.

ness is not suspected. What harm, think you, can a slip of a girl and her feeble grandfather do an army of Great Britain? Go — bid her enter. I will freshen up a bit and return presently. We must don our gayest attire, corporal, for we entertain to-night. Ha, ha, ha!

(Exit CORPORAL, C.)

Captain. Jove! I feel as elated as a school-boy. The little maid is right comely. Please Heaven that she hath a merry wit!

(Exit CAPTAIN, R.)

(Enter CORPORAL, C., followed by MOLLY TEMPERTON.)

W.
Anticipation realized.

Molly. Say it again, Corporal Hawkins. I scarce believe such goodly fortune mine. The great captain himself deigns to receive me? — say you so?

Corporal. Yes, miss; hit's the captain's hordors.

Molly. (*speaking out door, C.*) Step this way, gran'sir. Captain Dorrington himself bids us enter.

Corporal. Pardon, miss. 'E did not say as 'ow your grandfather was to come.

Molly (*innocently*). Oh, but I cannot leave him alone in the night air. This spring weather is very trying to grandpa's rheumatism. (*Calling.*) Come along, gran'sir, come along.

Joe Fleming (*outside*). Yes, dearie, I'm a-comin'.

(Enter JOE, C. *He is disguised as an old man with long white wig and beard,*

*and carries a large market-basket
and cane.)*

Corporal (aside). 'Eavens! Hi'm hin
for hit now. (*To MOLLY.*) Be seated,
miss. Hi'll speak to the captain.

(Exit CORPORAL, R.)

*(JOE watches the CORPORAL stealthily till
he disappears, then steps briskly to
door, C., and examines it critically.)*

Joe. See, Molly — it locks with an
iron bar. A sweep of the arm, and 'tis
open — so. (*Unbolts door, then closes
it; points to window.*) In yonder grated
window may be placed the signal-light.
(*Indicating candelabrum.*) This candle-
stick's the very thing. Canst find a way
to lift it to the window ledge?

Molly. Ay, trust me for that! The
captain himself shall give the signal.
When the three lights twinkle through
the window bars, make ready; and when
the last faint candle flickers out, strike
for liberty!

Joe. Bravo! What a stanch little pat-
riot you are! Faith, I half suspect
you love the colonies better than you
love Joe Fleming. I'm green with jeal-
ousy. Come here till I tell thee so.
Plague take this badge of decrepitude!
(*Removes wig and beard.*) There —
dost love me better now?

Molly (tenderly). I love thee always,
dear.

Joe. And I — Oh, Molly, I cannot
let you stay here in this grim old fortress

III. A. 5 (b)

Anticipation of the use to which
the candlestick is later to
be put. See annotation let-
tered "X".

III. B. 4 (b)

The audience is permitted to
share the secret of Joe's dis-
guise.

to-night. Think of the dangers that beset thee! These soldiers are reckless and unscrupulous ——

Molly. Hush, dear! The chance has come — let's be strong enough to take it. Our little adventure, begun in sport, has paved the way for a mighty victory. The hand of Fate is in it. Don't worry, Joe. These men will be like puppets, and I shall pull the strings. (*Sound of steps outside.*) Quick! The captain is coming.

(*JOE resumes his disguise quickly.*)

(*Enter CAPTAIN, R.*)

Captain. Ah, my little fascinator, what have you brought me to-night?

Molly. Alas, sir, my basket is empty! Every chicken and even my last glass of jelly has been sold to your ravenous soldiers.

Captain. But surely you have a sweet smile of welcome for me, or perchance a sweeter kiss?

Joe (muttering). The scoundrel!

(*Recovers himself and coughs violently.*)

Captain. Why, grandpa, your bronchial tubes are grievously affected. Let me prescribe the open air — these rough old walls are damp and chilly. (*To MOLLY.*) My pretty, suppose you persuade grandpa to ruminate down on the lake side for an hour or so. I much prefer to see thee quite alone.

Molly (curtsying). I'm at thy service,

III. A. 4 (a)
Joe's reluctance at leaving Molly
— a humanizing touch.

III. B. 1 (c)
The "little adventure" is the
event out of which the sub-
sequent action is evolved.

sir. (*To JOE.*) Wait for me, gran'-sir, near the boat. Captain Dorrington desires to talk with me.

Joe (as if deaf). Eh? What for?

Molly. Oh, he's going to bargain for to-morrow's dinner. (*With a sly wink.*) You know how cheaply I sell provisions to the soldiers here.

Joe. Yes, I know. You're a good little girl, Molly. (*In a hoarse whisper.*) Make the price a dear one. Squeeze the Britishers dry. Ha, ha, ha! I'll wait for thee down by the landing.

Molly. Very well. I'll meet thee there.

(*Exit JOE, C. The CAPTAIN opens the door for him, and bolts it after he has withdrawn.*)

Captain (aside). Deuce take me if the little baggage isn't glad to be rid of him. Methinks she'll prove an easy conquest. (*To MOLLY.*) Make yourself at home, my dear. 'Tis rare indeed that Captain Dorrington has a chance to play the host.

Molly. You are very kind.

Captain (graciously). Not at all. The pleasure's mine, I'm sure. Not every British officer can boast a pretty girl to cheer his solitude.

Molly (coquettishly). No; nor every country maid the acquaintance of a British officer.

Captain (boisterously). Well put, egad! You're luckier, I trow, than half your tomboy companions. Tell me, my dear, what the young people of your neighborhood do to enliven the dulness of an evening.

III. A 5 (a)
The Captain remembers "grand-
pa's" deafness later. See
annotation lettered "Y".

Molly. Oh, there's now and then a quilting bee, and sometimes we have church "socials" where we play the most exciting games.

Captain. Do you indeed? And what, I pray, are some of these exciting games?

Molly (shyly). "Drop the handkerchief" is one, and — and we also play "snuff the candle."

Captain. "Snuff the candle?" What may that game be like?

Molly. Well, you see there are lighted candles like — why, like those there in the candlestick. Then some one is blindfolded, and — (*Clapping her hands.*) Oh, captain, let's ask the soldiers in and play the game. It's, oh, such fun!

Captain (doubtfully). But — but that will spoil our tête-à-tête.

Molly. Yes, I know; but it's lots jollier to have a crowd. Besides, captain, it's a — er — kissing game.

Captain (with surprise). A what? Oh, I say, my dear, we don't need a crowd to play that sort of game.

Molly (petulantly). Oh, yes, we do. (*Pouting.*) I ought to know. I've played it. (*In a wheedling tone.*) Now, captain, please invite the soldiers in. I — I want to see them. Don't be squeamish.

Captain. Well, well! you certainly have a winning way with you. The boys will be glad enough to come. (*Calling.*) Ho, corporal!

(*Enter CORPORAL, R.*)

Corporal (saluting). What's wanted, sir?

III. A. 5 (a)
Anticipation of the game to follow. See annotation lettered "Z".

III. B. 3 (a)
A conflict of minds.

Captain (returning salute). Ask the boys to step this way. Our little guest here desires to (ha, ha ha!) play games with them.

Corporal. What! Hall of them, sir?

Captain. Exactly. Be quick about it, please.

Corporal. Wery well, sir.

(*Exit CORPORAL, R.*)

Captain. Now, my dainty little lady, you are about to behold the mighty troops of good old England. In serried ranks they shall stand before you —

Molly (interrupting). The entire garrison, mind. Every British soldier must do me homage.

Captain (laughing). Ha, ha, ha! What an exacting little despot you are, to be sure! Well, you shall see every mother's son of them. (*Sound of tramping outside.*) And here they come.

(*Enter CORPORAL, R., followed by soldiers.*

Some of the soldiers are shy and awkward, others, self-confident and bold.)

III. B. 2 (a)
Contrast in the appearance of the soldiers.

Captain (to soldiers). Lads, this is our guest — Mistress Molly Temperton. Salute her.

Soldiers salute.)

Molly (clapping her hands). Oh, isn't it pretty! (*To CAPTAIN — demurely.*) Would you mind having them do it again?

Captain (with admiration). Egad,

II. 3 (a)
The pivotal point of the plot. The Captain's permission for the soldiers to enter leads to the ultimate capture of the fort.

you're a cool one! (*To soldiers.*) Boys, the little lady here is going to teach us a new game. They play it at (ha, ha ha!) church "socials" across the lake.

Molly. Yes; and — and it's a monstrosously exciting game. (*Takes candelabrum from table, watching the soldiers cunningly meanwhile.*) You see, I — I place this candlestick on the window ledge — so. (*Places candelabrum at window; pauses as if fearing that she has aroused suspicion, then sighs with relief.*) Ah! (*Turns to soldiers abruptly.*) Has each of you a pocket-handkerchief? (*All reply, taking handkerchiefs from pockets. Some answer, "Yes;" others, "Yes, mum," "Certainly," etc.*) Good! Now will you be so kind as to tie your handkerchiefs tightly about your eyes?

Captain (remonstrating). Why, my dear, not all of us at once, surely?

Molly. Yes, all at once. I know how the game is played.

Captain. Yes, but —

Molly (imperiously). Not another word! (*Shyly.*) Do you think I have no modesty? Would I wish to kiss the lucky man with all the others looking on. Fie, captain! Your knowledge of women is not over keen for one who wears a soldier's uniform.

Captain (hesitating). Perhaps not; yet —

Molly. Oh, captain, how monstrously dense you are! (*In a loud whisper.*) Suppose — er — suppose I want to help you win the prize?

Captain. By Jove, what a little witch you are! I ween there's method in thy

III. B. 1 (b)

The candlestick serves the double purpose of an object in the game and the signal to the Colonists outside.

X.

This use of the candlestick has been anticipated.

III. B. 3 (a)

Mental conflict follows.

madness. (*To soldiers.*) Well, lads, let it be as Mistress Temperton ordains. Bind the kerchiefs firmly about your foreheads, and don't dare remove them, whatever happens, unless I so command. I'll set you a good example. (*To MOLLY.*) Wilt give me thine assistance, Mistress Molly?

Molly. Yes indeed. (*Ties handkerchief about CAPTAIN'S eyes. It should be so arranged that he can easily see through it. Soldiers, including CORPORAL, help one another adjust blindfolds.*) There, 'tis done! Canst see?

Captain. No, i' faith! I'm totally bereft of sight.

Molly (*to soldiers*). And are the rest of you as firmly hoodwinked? (*Soldiers answer affirmatively as before.*) Very well. We're ready now, I think. Captain, I'll turn thee about thrice that you may not find the candlestick too easily. Then, if thy wits be sharp and thy lungs right strong, three trials should suffice to snuff each candle on the window ledge and give thee thy reward.

Captain (*impatiently*). Nectar of the gods! Hurry, little Hebe; my lips are on fire!

Molly. Make ready then. (*Turns CAPTAIN about three times, counting as she turns.*) Once — twice — thrice. Now find the candles if you can. I wish thee luck! (*CAPTAIN moves toward the window with hands outstretched, pausing before the candelabrum.*) Bravo! Now blow right lustily. (*CAPTAIN blows, and one candle is extinguished.*) Good! Again. (*MOLLY edges toward door, C.*

III. A. 5 (a)
Anticipation of later conduct of soldiers. See annotation lettered "Q".

Z.
Anticipation of game realized.

III. B. 1 (c)
A touch of irony: the Captain himself blows out the candles, which is the signal for the attack on the fort.

CAPTAIN *blows a second time, and another candle is extinguished. The stage lights are lowered as each candle goes out. MOLLY applauds as CAPTAIN extinguishes the second candle.*) Excellent, captain, excellent!

Captain (turning quickly toward her). What are you doing at that door?

Molly. How do you know I'm at the door?

Captain (stammering). Why — why — because —

Molly (severely). Yes; because you're cheating. So, my clever captain, you can see! The honest country youths who play this game play fair. Their manners were not learned at George's court. (*Opens door.*) I'm going home.

Captain (sharply). Stop! I command it.

Molly (snapping her fingers). That for thy commands!

Captain. What! You dare defy me? (*CAPTAIN tears his handkerchief from his eyes, and quickly extinguishes the remaining candle. The only light on the stage is that which shines faintly through the doorway. The lake is seen through the open door, and the clouds in the distance are tinged with the purple glow of dawn.*)

Molly (speaking from doorway). Yes I do defy thee. See, 'tis daybreak. Long will thy country remember this day!

Captain. What do you mean?

Molly. Oh, you will learn my meaning soon enough. Good-morrow.

III. B. 3 (a)
Mental conflict becomes sharper

III. A. 3 (a)
The emotional stimulus of light is introduced naturally by the tinge of dawn seen through the open door.



VICTORIEN SARDOU

Captain. Stay! You promised me a kiss.

Molly. But you cheated to obtain it.

Captain (striding forward and seizing her roughly in his arms). Yes, I cheated — cheated that I might crush thy haughty spirit, little rebel. What are you going to do about it, eh? You are in my power. All these soldiers here are at my beck and call. Poor old grandpa is your only protector — feeble old grandpa, who waits on the shore of the lake till morning for his wayward grandchild to return to him. Ha, ha, ha! Come — give me the kiss, my pretty, or I'll take it of my own free will.

Molly (screaming and struggling violently). Let me go, sir. I —

Captain. Scratch and scream, my little temptress! — 'twill avail thee little. Grandpa is a wee bit deaf, you know.

(Enter JOE FLEMING hurriedly, C. He has discarded his false wig and beard.)

Joe. Not so deaf as you surmise, my valiant captain. (Sternly.) Release Mistress Temperton instantly, or I'll show thee how straight a Continental soldier shoots.

(Aims pistol at CAPTAIN.)

Captain (startling back). What means this threat? I —

Molly. It means that I have won the game. Captain Dorrington, I bid thee surrender.

III. B. 3 (b)

Here the conflict becomes physical, and the Captain triumphs for the moment.

Y.

The Captain recalls the fact that "grandpa" is deaf.

III. B. 3 (b)

With the appearance of Joe the Captain is in turn overpowered by physical force.

(Enter country youths; C. They stand near the door with muskets aimed at British soldiers, who are huddled together at L.)

Captain (fiercely). Surrender? Never. Company, attention! A thousand curses! They have no arms, and are standing in the corner like awkward dunces. Off with those kerchiefs, men! To arms, I say!

(The soldiers, including CORPORAL, remove kerchiefs, and stand blinking, as if dazed.)

Joe (quietly but firmly). Captain Dorrington, resistance is useless. You are surrounded by Colonists on every side. I demand the surrender of this fort.

(The CAPTAIN starts forward angrily, but pauses before the lowered muskets, as though realizing that his efforts must prove ineffectual. Gradually he assumes a nonchalant manner.)

Captain (shrugging his shoulders). Lads, we're overpowered. We've danced and now must pay the fiddler. (To JOE.) We submit, sir, to the fortunes of war.

Joe (courteously). You will find our terms most rational.

Molly. Well, captain, I've tarried over long, but thy company is vastly entertaining. I'll think of thee when next I play that monstrosly exciting game called "snuff the candle." Again I bid thee good-morning.

Captain (with elaborate politeness). Good-morning, Mistress Temperton. That little game will cost me dear,

Q.
The conduct of the soldiers was anticipated when the Captain instructed them not to remove the kerchiefs till ordered by him to do so.

but then — who knows? — mayhap 'tis
worth it.

III. A. 4 (a)
Another humanizing touch — the
Captain is courteous and a
"good loser."

(MISTRESS MOLLY *makes a deep curtsy,*
and goes out, C.)

CURTAIN

A
PROGRAM OF STUDY

CHAPTER XII

A PROGRAM OF STUDY

In studying a specific play the student will doubtless find it profitable to make *marginal annotations* after the style indicated in the preceding chapter. Before attempting this he should first thoroughly familiarize himself with the story of the play, since an analysis of parts is futile without a comprehensive knowledge of the whole.

The following program of study, arranged somewhat in the form of an examination paper, used in connection with the analytical DIAGRAM (page 41), should prove of assistance:

1. To what extent have the unities been observed?
2. Note instances in which characters have related events which have occurred prior to the opening of the play.
3. What influence have these past events exerted on the trend of the action?
4. Is the plot borrowed or original?
5. Does the play recount more than a single story? If so, distinguish the separate stories.
6. What is the method of plot development? If it represents a rise and fall of fortunes, where does the rise end, and the fall begin? If the action is concerned

with the fall merely, what forces have given impetus to the downward motion?

7. Is the vehicle of expression adapted to the theme and method of treatment?

8. Name instances where music, light, tumult, etc., are introduced as essential parts of the play itself.

9. Note all instances of anticipation.

10. Is the use of any implement necessary at some crisis in the play? If so, note how and when it is brought into the scene.

11. Is there any event out of which the subsequent action is evolved?

12. Note instances of economy in the introduction of characters or objects.

13. Are the character types diversified? Note any further use of contrast.

14. Is the story of the play based on conflict? Note minor instances of conflict.

15. Does the theme appeal to popular taste? Name instances in which the audience is aware of a situation which is represented as unknown to certain of the characters.

APPENDIXES

ANNOTATED PLAYS

- I. The *Screen Scene* from *The School for Scandal*
 - II. The *Trial Scene* from *The Merchant of Venice*
 - III. Albert Smith's Dramatization of *The Cricket on the Hearth*
-
- IV. A List of Plays Recommended for Study

APPENDIX I

The *Screen Scene* from
The School for Scandal

APPENDIX I

INTRODUCTORY

As an example of masterly art in the handling of a dramatic situation, the *Screen Scene* from Richard Brinsley Sheridan's *The School for Scandal* is here printed.

This comedy was first produced at the Drury Lane Theatre, London, in 1777, and is a keen satire on the manners and affectations of contemporary society. For the benefit of those readers who may be unfamiliar with the story of the play, the following explanation of the plot is given:

Sir Peter Teazle "marries a young wife," who was "educated in the country." After her marriage, Lady Teazle's desire to become a "woman of fashion" leads her to associate with Lady Sneerwell and other scandal-loving celebrities, and to engage in a mild flirtation with one Joseph Surface. Joseph's "real attachment" is to Sir Peter's ward, Maria (or rather to her fortune), but, finding in his brother Charles a "favored rival," he has been obliged to "mask his pretensions," and Lady Teazle is unaware of them. Joseph is, in reality, "artful, selfish and malicious," but "with all his acquaintance he passes for a youthful miracle of prudence, good sense

and benevolence," while his brother Charles, though reputed to be "the most dissipated and extravagant young fellow in the kingdom," is, in point of fact, honest, genuine and warm-hearted. Sir Peter is jealous of his young wife, but does not suspect her interest in Joseph, erroneously supposing that Charles is the one whom she favors.

The *Screen Scene* follows:

THE
SCREEN SCENE
FROM
"THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL"

By

RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN

ACT IV

SCENE III.—*A library in JOSEPH SURFACE'S House, London. A large screen, Pembroke table, with a book on it; chairs.*

JOSEPH SURFACE *and* a SERVANT
discovered.

Joseph S. No letter from Lady Teazle?
Serv. No, sir.

Joseph S. I am surprised she has not sent, if she is prevented from coming. Sir Peter certainly does not suspect me. Yet I hope I may not lose the heiress through the scrape I have drawn myself into with the wife; however, Charles's imprudence and bad character are great points in my favor. [*Knocking heard without.*]

Serv. Sir, I believe that must be Lady Teazle.

Joseph S. Hold! See whether it is or not before you go to the door: I have a particular message for you if it should be my brother.

Serv. 'Tis her ladyship, sir; she always leaves her chair at the milliner's in the next street.

Note the reference to the milliner and the screen.

Joseph S. Stay, stay; draw that screen before the window — (*SERVANT does so*) — that will do; — my opposite neighbor is a lady of a curious temper. (*SERVANT exit.*) I have a difficult hand to play in this affair. Lady Teazle has lately suspected my views on Maria; but she must by no means be let into the secret, — at least, till I have her more in my power.

Enter LADY TEAZLE.

Lady T. What, sentiment in soliloquy now? Have you been very impatient? O Lud! don't pretend to look grave. I vow I couldn't come before.

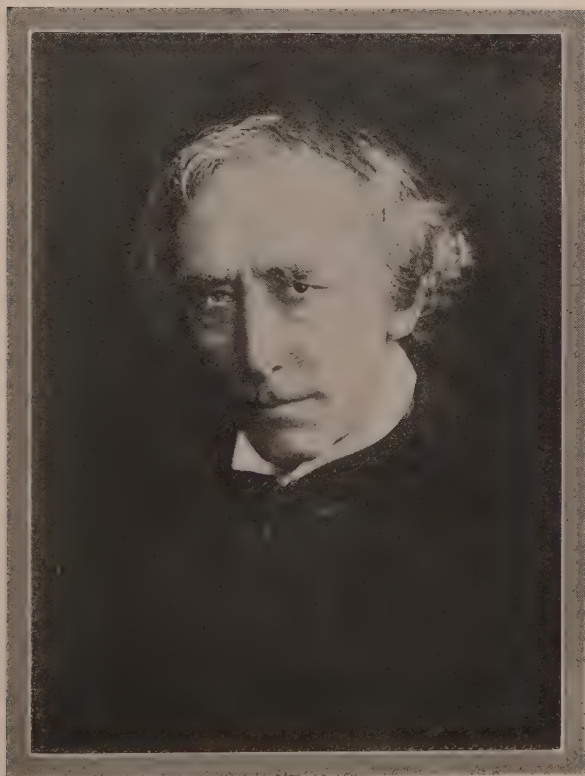
Observe the repeated references to Joseph's "sentiments" until the explosive denunciation of these sentiments by Sir Peter at the close of the scene.

Joseph S. O, madam, punctuality is a species of constancy very unfashionable in a lady of quality.

[*Places chairs, and sits after LADY TEAZLE is seated.*]

Lady T. Upon my word you ought to pity me. Do you know, Sir Peter is grown so ill-natured to me of late, and so jealous of Charles, too — that's the best of the story, isn't it?

Joseph S. (aside). I am glad my scandalous friends keep that up.



HENRY IRVING



HELEN TERRY

Lady T. I am sure I wish he would let Maria marry him, and then perhaps he would be convinced; don't you, Mr. Surface?

Joseph S. (aside). Indeed I do not. (*Aloud.*) Oh, certainly I do; for then my dear Lady Teazle would be also convinced how wrong her suspicions were of my having any design on the silly girl.

Lady T. Well, well, I'm inclined to believe you. But isn't it provoking to have the most ill-natured things said of one? And there's my friend Lady Sneerwell has circulated I don't know how many scandalous tales of me, and all without any foundation, too — that's what vexes me.

Joseph S. Ay, madam, to be sure, that is the provoking circumstance — without foundation; yes, yes, there's the mortification, indeed; for when a scandalous story is believed against one, there certainly is no comfort like the consciousness of having deserved it.

Lady T. No, to be sure, then I'd forgive their malice; but to attack me, who am really so innocent, and who never say an ill-natured thing of anybody — that is, of any friend; and then Sir Peter, too, to have him so peevish, and so suspicious, when I know the integrity of my own heart — indeed, 'tis monstrous!

Joseph S. But my dear Lady Teazle, 'tis your own fault if you suffer it. When a husband entertains a groundless suspicion of his wife, and withdraws his confidence from her, the original compact is broken, and she owes it to the

Note the exquisite satire of the ensuing dialogue.

honor of her sex to endeavor to outwit him.

Lady T. Indeed! — so that if he suspects me without cause it follows that the best way of curing his jealousy is to give him reason for't.

Joseph S. Undoubtedly — for your husband should never be deceived in you, — and in that case it becomes you to be frail in compliment to his discernment.

Lady T. To be sure, what you say is very reasonable; and when the consciousness of my innocence —

Joseph S. Ah, my dear madam, there is the great mistake; 'tis this very conscious innocence that is of the greatest prejudice to you. What is it makes you negligent of forms, and careless of the world's opinion? Why, the consciousness of your own innocence. What makes you thoughtless in your conduct, and apt to run into a thousand little imprudences? Why, the consciousness of your own innocence. What makes you impatient of Sir Peter's temper, and outrageous at his suspicions? Why, the consciousness of your innocence.

Lady T. 'Tis very true!

Joseph S. Now, my dear Lady Teazle, if you would but once make a trifling *faux pas*, you can't conceive how cautious you would grow, and how ready to humor and agree with your husband.

Lady T. Do you think so?

Joseph S. Oh! I am sure on't; and then you would find all scandal would cease at once; for, in short, your character at present is like a person in a

plethora, absolutely dying from too much health.

Lady T. So, so; then I perceive your prescription is that I must sin in my own defense, and part with my virtue to preserve my reputation.

Joseph S. Exactly so, upon my credit, ma'am.

Lady T. Well, certainly this is the oddest doctrine, and the newest receipt for avoiding calumny!

Joseph S. An infallible one, believe me. Prudence, like experience, must be paid for.

Lady T. Why, if my understanding were once convinced —

Joseph S. Oh, certainly, madam, your understanding should be convinced. Yes, yes — heaven forbid I should persuade you to do anything you thought wrong. No, no, I have too much honor to desire it.

Lady T. Don't you think we may as well leave *honor* out of the argument?

[*Rises.*

Joseph S. Ah! the ill effects of your country education, I see, still remain with you.

[*Rises.*

Lady T. I doubt they do, indeed; and I will fairly own to you that if I could be persuaded to do wrong, it would be by Sir Peter's ill-usage sooner than your *honorable logic*, after all.

Joseph S. Then, by this hand, which he is unworthy of —

[*Taking her hand.*

A glimpse of Lady Teazle's true character.

Enter SERVANT.

S'death, you blockhead; what do you want?

Serv. I beg your pardon, sir, but I thought you would not choose Sir Peter to come up without announcing him.

Joseph S. Sir Peter! Oons — the devil!

Lady T. Sir Peter! O Lud — I'm ruined — I'm ruined!

Serv. Sir, 'twasn't I let him in.

Lady T. Oh! I'm quite undone! What will become of me? Now, Mr. Logic — Oh! mercy, sir, he's on the stairs. I'll get behind here, and if ever I'm so imprudent again —

The audience shares the secret of Lady Teazle's hiding-place.

[*Goes behind screen.*]

Joseph S. Give me that book.

[*Sits down.* SERVANT *pretends to adjust his chair.*]

Enter SIR PETER.

Sir P. Ay, ever improving himself. Mr. Surface, Mr. Surface.

[*Taps JOSEPH on the shoulder.*]

Joseph S. Oh! my dear Sir Peter, I beg your pardon — (*gapping — throws away the book*) — I have been dozing over a stupid book. Well, I am much obliged to you for this call. You haven't been here, I believe, since I fitted up this room. Books, you know, are the only things I am a coxcomb in.

Sir P. 'Tis very neat indeed. — Well, well, that's proper; and you can even make your screen a source of knowledge — hung, I perceive, with maps?

[*Walking up towards screen.*]

Joseph S. O, yes, I find great use in that screen.

[Turning SIR PETER from the screen.

Sir P. I dare say you must, certainly, when you want to find anything in a hurry.

Joseph S. (*aside*). Aye, or to hide anything in a hurry, either.

Sir P. Well, I have a little private business——

Joseph S. You need not stay.

(*To the SERVANT.*)

Serv. No, sir. (*Exit.*)

Joseph S. Here's a chair, Sir Peter — I beg ——

Sir P. (*sits*). Well, now we are alone, there is a subject, my dear friend, on which I wish to unburden my mind to you — a point of the greatest moment to my peace; in short, my good friend, Lady Teazle's conduct of late has made me very unhappy.

Joseph S. (*seated*). Indeed! I am very sorry to hear it.

Sir P. Yes, 'tis but too plain she has not the least regard for me; but what's worse, I have pretty good authority to suppose she has formed an attachment to another.

Joseph S. Indeed! You astonish me!

Sir P. Yes; and, between ourselves, I think I've discovered the person.

Joseph S. How! You alarm me exceedingly.

Sir P. Ay, my dear friend, I knew you would sympathize with me!

Joseph S. Yes — believe me, Sir Peter, such a discovery would hurt me just as much as it would you.

Sir P. I am convinced of it. Ah! it is a happiness to have a friend whom we

Creation of suspense — the audience is eagerly anticipating Sir Peter's discovery of Lady Teazle.

can trust even with one's family secrets. But have you no guess who I mean?

Joseph S. I haven't the most distant idea. It can't be Sir Benjamin Backbite?

Sir P. Oh, no! What say you to Charles?

Joseph S. My brother! Impossible!

Sir P. Oh! my dear friend, the goodness of your own heart misleads you. You judge of others by yourself.

Joseph S. Certainly, Sir Peter, the heart that is conscious of its own integrity is ever slow to credit another's treachery.

Sir P. True — but your brother has no sentiment — you never hear him talk so.

Joseph S. Yet I can't but think Lady Teazle herself has too much principle.

Sir P. Ay, — but what is principle against the flattery of a handsome, lively young fellow?

Joseph S. That's very true.

Sir P. And then, you know, the difference of our ages makes it very improbable that she should have any very great affection for me; and if she were to be frail, and I were to make it public, why the town would only laugh at me, the foolish old bachelor who had married a girl.

Joseph S. That's true, to be sure — they would laugh.

Sir P. Laugh — ay, and make ballads and paragraphs, and the devil knows what of me.

Joseph S. No, you must never make it public.

Observe how Joseph's propensity for uttering "sentiments" is made to serve a didactic as well as a dramatic purpose.

Sir P. But then, that the nephew of my old friend, Sir Oliver, should be the person to attempt such a wrong hurts me more nearly.

Joseph S. Ay, there's the point. When ingratitude bars the dart of injury, the wound has double danger in it.

Sir Peter. Ay—I, that was, in a manner, left his guardian; in whose house he has been so often entertained; who never in my life denied him — any advice.

Joseph S. O, 'tis not to be credited. There may be a man capable of such baseness, to be sure; but for my part till you can give me positive proofs, I cannot but doubt it. However, if it should be proved on him, he is no longer a brother of mine — I disclaim kindred with him: for the man who can break through the laws of hospitality and tempt the wife of his friend, deserves to be branded as the pest of society.

Sir P. What a difference there is between you! What noble sentiments!

Joseph S. Yet I cannot suspect Lady Teazle's honor.

Sir P. I am sure I wish to think well of her, and to remove all ground of quarrel between us. She has lately reproached me more than once with having made no settlement on her: and, in our last quarrel, she almost hinted that she should not break her heart if I was dead. Now, as we seem to differ in our ideas of expense, I have resolved she shall have her own way, and be her own mistress in that respect, for the future; and if I were to die she will find

Revelation to Lady Teazle of Sir Peter's real nobility of character.

I have not been inattentive to her interest while living. Here, my friend, are the drafts of two deeds, which I wish to have your opinion on. By one, she will enjoy eight hundred a year independent while I live; and, by the other, the bulk of my fortune after my death.

Joseph S. This conduct, Sir Peter, is indeed truly generous. (*Aside.*) I wish it may not corrupt my pupil.

Sir P. Yes, I am determined she shall have no cause to complain, though I would not have her acquainted with the latter instance of my affection yet awhile.

Joseph S. (*Aside.*) Nor I, if I could help it.

Sir P. And now, my dear friend, if you please, we will talk over the situation of your hopes with Maria.

Joseph S. (*softly.*) O, no, Sir Peter; another time, if you please.

Sir P. I am sensibly chagrined at the little progress you seem to make in her affections.

Joseph S. I beg you will not mention it, sir. What are my disappointments when your happiness is in debate? (*Aside.*) 'Sdeath! I will be ruined every way.

Sir P. And though you are averse to my acquainting Lady Teazle with your passion, I'm sure she's not your enemy in the affair.

Joseph S. Pray, Sir Peter, now, oblige me. I am really too much affected by the subject we have been speaking of, to bestow a thought on my own concerns. The man who is intrusted with his friend's distresses can never ——

Re-enter SERVANT.

Well, sir?

Serv. Your brother, sir, is speaking to a gentleman in the street, and says he knows you are within.

Joseph S. 'Sdeath, blockhead, I'm not within — I'm out for the day.

Sir P. Stay — hold — a thought has struck me! You shall be at home.

Joseph S. Well, well, let him up. (*Exit SERVANT.*) (*Aside.*) He'll interrupt Sir Peter, however.

Sir P. Now, my good friend, oblige me I entreat you. Before Charles comes, let me conceal myself somewhere — then do you tax him on the point we have been talking, and his answer may satisfy me at once.

Joseph S. O fie, Sir Peter! would you have me join in so mean a trick? To trepan my brother, too?

Sir P. Nay, you tell me you are sure he is innocent; if so, you do him the greatest service by giving him an opportunity to clear himself, and you will set my heart at rest. Come, you shall not refuse me: (*Going up*) here, behind the screen will be — Hey! what the devil! there seems to be one listener here already; I'll swear I saw a petticoat.

Joseph S. Ha! ha! ha! Well this is ridiculous enough. I'll tell you, Sir Peter, though I hold a man of intrigue to be a most despicable character, yet you know, it does not follow that one is to be an absolute Joseph, either! Hark'ee, 'tis a little French milliner — a silly rogue that plagues me,—and having some

Increase in suspense.

A natural touch. It is at the milliner's that Lady Teazle "always leaves her chair."

character to lose, on your coming, sir, she ran behind the screen.

Sir P. Ah! Joseph! Joseph! Did I ever think that you — But, egad she has overheard all I have been saying of my wife.

Joseph S. O, 'twill never go further, you may depend upon it.

Sir P. No? then, faith, let her hear it out. Here's a closet will do as well.

Joseph S. Well, go in there.

Sir P. Sly rogue! sly rogue!

[Going into the closet.]

Joseph S. A narrow escape, indeed; and a curious situation I'm in, to part man and wife in this manner.

Lady T. (*peeping*). Couldn't I steal off?

Joseph S. Keep close, my angel!

Sir P. (*peeping out*). Joseph, tax him home.

Joseph S. Back, my dear friend!

Lady T. Couldn't you lock Sir Peter in?

Joseph S. Be still, my life!

Sir P. (*peeping*). You're sure the little milliner won't blab?

Joseph S. In, in, my dear Sir Peter. 'Fore Gad, I wish I had a key to the door.

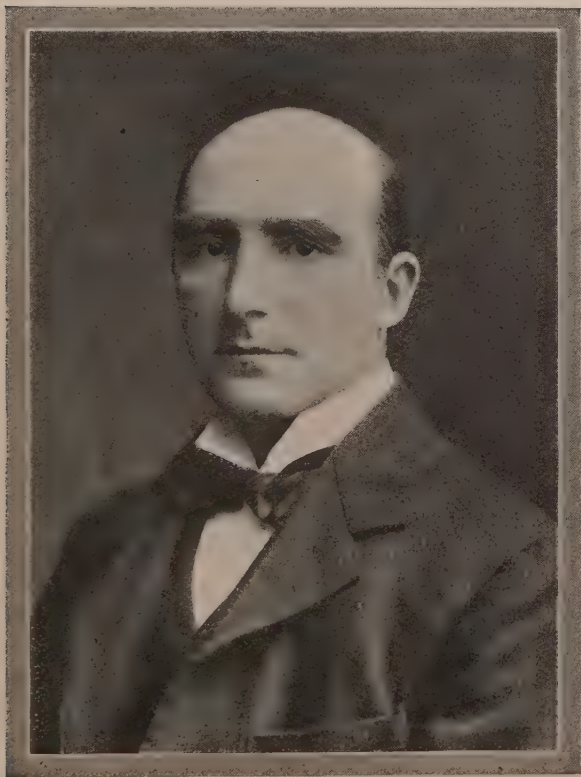
Enter CHARLES SURFACE.

Charles S. Holloa! brother, what has been the matter? Your fellow would not let me up at first. What! have you had a Jew or a wench with you.

Joseph S. Neither, brother, I assure you.

Charles S. But what has made Sir

The interest of the audience is further enhanced by knowledge of Sir Peter's concealment.



ARTHUR PINERO

Peter steal off? I thought he had been with you.

Joseph S. He *was*, brother; but hearing you were coming, he did not choose to stay.

Charles S. What? was the old gentleman afraid I wanted to borrow money of him?

Sir Peter has already stated that he never in his life denied Charles — "any advice!"

Joseph S. No, sir; but I am sorry to find, Charles, that you have lately given that worthy man grounds for great uneasiness.

Charles S. Yes, they tell me I do that to a great many worthy men. But how so, pray?

Joseph S. To be plain with you, brother, he thinks you are endeavoring to gain Lady Teazle's affections from him?

Charles S. Who, I? O Lud, not I, upon my word. Ha! ha! ha! ha! So the old fellow has found out that he has got a young wife, has he?

Joseph S. This is no subject to jest on, brother. He who can laugh ——

Charles S. True, true, as you were going to say; then, seriously, I never had the least idea of what you charge me with, upon my honor.

Joseph S. Well, it will give Sir Peter great satisfaction to hear this.

Charles S. To be sure, I once thought the lady seemed to have taken a fancy to me; but, upon my soul, I never gave her the least encouragement: — besides, you know my attachment to Maria.

Joseph S. But, sure, brother, even if Lady Teazle had betrayed the fondest partiality for you ——

Charles S. Why, look'ee, Joseph, I

hope I shall never deliberately do a dishonorable action; but if a pretty woman was purposely to throw herself in my way, and that pretty woman married to a man old enough to be her father —

Joseph S. Well —

Charles S. Why, I believe I should be obliged to —

Joseph S. What?

Charles S. To borrow a little of your morality, that's all. But, brother, do you know now that you surprise me exceedingly by naming *me* with Lady Teazle; for, i'faith I always understood you were her favorite.

Joseph S. O, for shame, Charles! This retort is foolish.

Charles S. Nay, I swear I have seen you exchange such significant glances —

Joseph S. Nay, nay, sir, this is no jest.

Charles S. Egad, I'm serious. Don't you remember one day when I called here —

Joseph S. Nay, prithee, Charles —

Charles S. And found you together —

Joseph S. Zounds, sir! I insist —

Charles S. And another time, when your servant —

Joseph S. Brother, brother, a word with you! (*Aside.*) Gad, I must stop him.

Charles S. Informed, I say, that —

Joseph S. Hush! I beg your pardon, but Sir Peter has overheard all we have been saying. I knew you would clear yourself, or I should not have consented.

Charles S. How, Sir Peter. Where is he?

Observe the contrast in the conversation and character of the brothers.

Joseph S. Softly; there!

[Points to the closet.

Charles S. O, 'fore heaven, I'll have him out. Sir Peter, come forth!

[Trying to get to the closet.

Joseph S. No, no —

Charles S. I say, Sir Peter, come into court — (*Pulls in SIR PETER.*) — What! my old guardian! What! — turn inquisitor, and take evidence incog? O, fie! O, fie!

A characteristic touch. Charles's many creditors, referred to elsewhere in the play, are doubtless responsible for his familiarity with the judicial summons.

Sir P. Give me your hand, Charles; I believe I have suspected you wrongfully but you mustn't be angry with Joseph — 'twas my plan!

Charles S. Indeed!

Sir P. But I acquit you. I promise you I don't think near so ill of you as I did: what I have heard has given me great satisfaction.

Charles S. (*apart to JOSEPH.*) Egad then, 'twas lucky you didn't hear any more, wasn't it, Joseph?

Sir P. Ah! you would have retorted on him.

Charles S. Ay, ay, that was a joke.

Sir P. Yes, yes, I know his honor too well.

Charles S. But you might as well suspect *him* as *me* in this matter, for all that. (*Apert to JOSEPH.*) Mightn't he, Joseph?

Sir P. Well, well, I believe you.

Joseph S. (*aside.*) Would they were both out of the room!

Sir P. And in future, perhaps, we may not be such strangers.

Re-enter SERVANT, and whispers to JOSEPH.

Serv. Lady Sneerwell is below, and says she will come up.

Joseph S. Lady Sneerwell! Gad's life! She must not come here! (*Exit SERVANT.*) Gentlemen, I beg pardon; I must wait on you downstairs; here is a person come on particular business.

Charles S. Well, you can see him in another room. Sir Peter and I have not met for a long time, and I have something to say to him.

Joseph S. (aside). They must not be left together. I'll send Lady Sneerwell away, and return directly. (*Apart to SIR PETER.*) Sir Peter, not a word of the French milliner.

Sir P. (crossing, and apart to JOSEPH). I! not for the world! (*Exit JOSEPH.*) Ah! Charles, if you associated more with your brother, one might indeed hope for your reformation. He is a man of sentiment. Well, there is nothing in the world so noble as a man of sentiment.

Charles S. Pshaw! he is too moral by half, and so apprehensive of his good name as he calls it that he would as soon let a priest into his house as a wench.

Sir P. No, no. Come, come, you wrong him. No, no! Joseph is no rake, but he is no such saint either, in that respect. (*Aside.*) I have a great mind to tell him — we should have such a laugh at Joseph.

Charles S. Oh, hang him! He's a very anchorite, a young hermit.

Sir P. Hark'ee — you must not abuse him; he may chance to hear of it again, I promise you.

Charles S. Why, you won't tell him?

The arrival of Lady Sneerwell draws Joseph from the room, and affords an opportunity for Sir Peter to acquaint Charles with the concealment of the "French milliner."

Sir P. No — but — this way. (*Aside.*)
Egad, I'll tell him. (*Aloud.*) Hark'ee
— have you a mind to have a good laugh
at Joseph?

Charles S. I should like it of all things.

Sir P. Then, i'faith, we will — I'll
be quit with him for discovering me.
(*Whispers.*) He had a girl with him when
I called.

Charles S. What! Joseph? You jest.

Sir P. Hush! — a little French mil-
liner — and the best of the jest is, she's
in the room now.

Charles S. The devil she is!

[*Looking at closet.*]

Sir P. Hush! I tell you!

[*Points to screen.*]

Charles S. Behind the screen! 'Slife,
let's unvail her.

Sir P. No, no — he's coming; you
shan't, indeed!

Charles S. Oh, egad, we'll have a
peep at the little milliner.

Sir P. Not for the world; Joseph will
never forgive me —

Charles S. I'll stand by you —

Sir P. Odds, here he is. (JOSEPH
SURFACE *enters just as* CHARLES
SURFACE *throws down the screen.*)

Charles S. Lady Teazle! by all that's
wonderful!

Sir P. Lady Teazle — by all that's
damnable!

Charles S. Sir Peter, this is one of the
smartest French milliners I ever saw.
Egad, you seem all to have been divert-
ing yourselves here at hide and seek, and
I don't see who is out of the secret.
Shall I beg your ladyship to inform

The irony of circumstance. Sir
Peter's desire to "have a good
laugh at Joseph" results in a
laugh at his own expense.

me? Not a word! Brother, will you be pleased to explain this matter? What! is Morality dumb too! Sir Peter, though I found you in the dark, perhaps you are not so now! All mute! Well, though I can make nothing of the affair, I suppose you perfectly understand one another — so I'll leave you to yourselves. (*Going.*) Brother, I'm sorry to find you have given that worthy man grounds for so much uneasiness. Sir Peter! there's nothing in the world so noble as a man of sentiment. [*Exit*]

Joseph S. Sir Peter — notwithstanding — I confess — that appearances are against me — if you will afford me your patience — I make no doubt — but I shall explain everything to your satisfaction.

Sir P. If you please, sir.

Joseph S. The fact is, sir, that Lady Teazle, knowing my pretensions to your ward Maria — I say, sir, Lady Teazle, being apprehensive of the jealousy of your temper — and knowing my friendship to the family — she, sir, I say, — called here — in order that — I might explain these pretensions — but on your coming — being apprehensive — as I said — of your jealousy — she withdrew — and this, you may depend on it, is the whole truth of the matter.

Sir P. A very clear account, upon my word; and I dare swear the lady will vouch for every article of it.

Lady T. (*coming forward*). For not one word of it, Sir Peter!

Sir P. How! don't you think it worth while to agree in the lie!

Note the verbal conflict.

Lady T. There is not one syllable of truth in what that gentleman has told you.

Sir P. I believe you, upon my soul, ma'am!

Joseph S. (aside).—'Sdeath, madam, will you betray me?

Lady T. Good Mr. Hypocrite, by your leave, I'll speak for myself.

Sir P. Ay, let her alone, sir; you'll find she'll make out a better story than you, without prompting.

Lady T. Hear me, Sir Peter! I came hither on no matter relating to your ward, and even ignorant of the gentleman's pretensions to her. But I came seduced by his insidious arguments, at least to listen to his pretended passion, if not to sacrifice your honor to his baseness.

Sir P. Now, I believe, the truth is coming, indeed.

Joseph S. The woman's mad!

Lady T. No, sir, she has recovered her senses, and your own arts have furnished her with the means. Sir Peter, I do not expect you to credit me, but the tenderness you expressed for me, when I am sure you could not think I was a witness to it, has so penetrated to my heart that had I left the place without the shame of this discovery, my future life should have spoken the sincerity of my gratitude. As for that smooth-tongued hypocrite, who would have seduced the wife of his too credulous friend, while he affected honorable addresses to his ward—I behold him now in a light so truly despicable, that

Note also that the essential principles of dramatic conflict are in evidence throughout the scene. Joseph is striving (1) to prevent Lady Teazle from learning of his intentions regarding Maria, (2) to keep from Sir Peter the knowledge of Lady Teazle's presence, and (3) to prevent Charles from inadvertently revealing to Sir Peter his intrigue with Lady Teazle.

The situation which Joseph's hypocritical conduct has invited is itself the means by which he is undone.

I shall never again respect myself for having listened to him.

[*Exit.*]

Joseph S. Notwithstanding all this, Sir Peter, Heaven knows ——

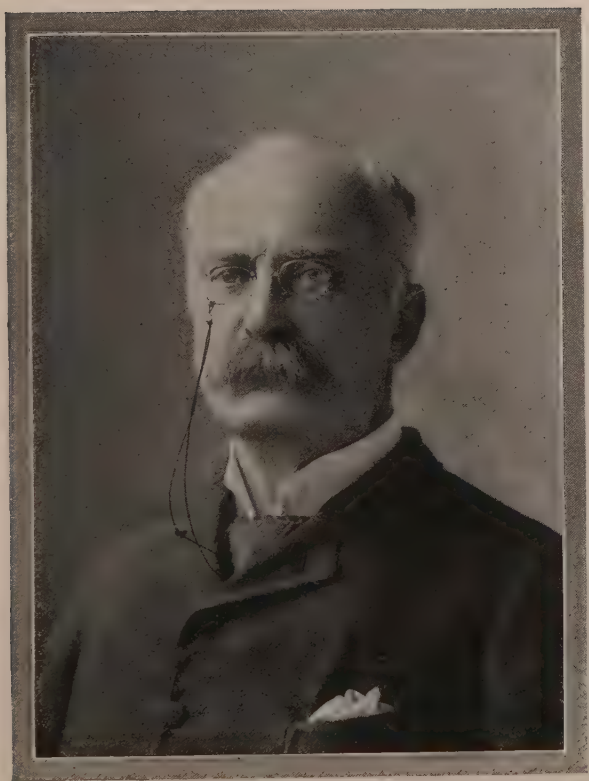
Sir P. That you are a villain! and so I leave you to your conscience.

Joseph S. You are too rash, Sir Peter; you shall hear me. The man who shuts out conviction by refusing to ——

Sir P. O, damn your sentiments!

[*Exeunt SIR PETER and SURFACE,*
talking.]

END OF ACT IV.



BRONSON HOWARD

APPENDIX II

*The Trial Scene from
The Merchant of Venice*

APPENDIX II

INTRODUCTORY

The *Trial Scene* from *The Merchant of Venice* has been selected as illustrating the dramatic principles of contrast, conflict, and suspense. Schlegel has said of this scene that it "is in itself a perfect drama."

THE
TRIAL SCENE
FROM
THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

By
WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

ACT IV.

SCENE I. *Venice. A Court of Justice.*

Enter the DUKE, the Magnificoes, ANTONIO, BASSANIO, GRATIANO, SALERIO, and others.

Duke. What, is Antonio here?

Antonio. Ready, so please your grace.

Duke. I am sorry for thee: thou art
come to answer

A stony adversary, an inhuman wretch
Uncapable of pity, void and empty
From any dram of mercy.

Antonio. I have heard
Your grace hath ta'en great pains to
qualify
His rigorous course; but since he stands
obdurate
And that no lawful means can carry
me
Out of his envy's reach, I do oppose

The opponents in the conflict (plaintiff and defendant) are Shylock and Antonio. Note the description of Shylock and the contrast between his character and that of Antonio.

My patience to his fury, and am arm'd
To suffer, with a quietness of spirit,
The very tyranny and rage of his.

Duke. Go one, and call the Jew into
the court.

Salerio. He is ready at the door: he
comes, my lord.

Enter SHYLOCK.

Duke. Make room, and let him stand
before our face.

Shylock, the world thinks, and I think
so too,

That thou but lead'st this fashion of thy
malice

To the last hour of act; and then 'tis
thought

Thou'lt show thy mercy and remorse
more strange

Than is thy strange apparent cruelty;
And where thou now exact'st the pen-
alty,

Which is a pound of this poor merchant's
flesh,

Thou wilt not only loose the forfeiture,
But, touch'd with human gentleness and
love,

Forgive a moiety of the principal;

Glancing an eye of pity on his losses,

That have of late so huddled on his
back,

Enow to press a royal merchant down
And pluck commiseration of his state
From brassy bosoms and rough hearts
of flint,

From stubborn Turks and Tartars, never
train'd

To offices of tender courtesy.

We all expect a gentle answer, Jew.

Some critics are inclined to think that the Duke expresses the original intention of Shylock, who desired merely to humiliate Antonio by placing him under obligation to one of a race he despised, but that at the last moment rage made him insist upon the literal fulfillment of Antonio's promise.

Shylock. I have possess'd your grace
of what I purpose;
And by our holy Sabbath have I sworn
To have the due and forfeit of my bond:
If you deny it, let the danger light
Upon your charter and your city's free-
dom.

You'll ask me, why I rather choose to
have

A weight of carrion flesh than to receive
Three thousand ducats: I'll not answer
that:

But, say, it is my humor: is it answer'd?
What if my house be troubled with a
rat

And I be pleas'd to give ten thousand
ducats

To have it baned? What, are you answer'd
yet?

Some men there are love not a gaping
pig;

Some, that are mad if they behold a
cat;

For affection,

Mistress of passion, sways it to the mood
Of what it likes or loathes. Now, for
your answer:

As there is no firm reason to be render'd,

Why he cannot abide a gaping pig;

Why he, a harmless necessary cat;

So can I give no reason, nor I will not,

More than a lodg'd hate and a certain
loathing

I bear Antonio, that I follow thus

A losing suit against him. Are you
answer'd?

Bassanio. This is no answer, thou
unfeeling man,

To excuse the current of thy cruelty.

*Shylock remains obdurate, and
insists upon his technical rights.*

Shylock. I am not bound to please
thee with my answers.

Bassanio. Do all men kill the things
they do not love?

Shylock. Hates any man the thing he
would not kill?

Bassanio. Every offense is not a hate
at first.

Shylock. What, would'st thou have a
serpent sting thee twice?

Antonio. I pray you, think you
question with the Jew:

You may as well go stand upon the
beach

And bid the main flood bate his usual
height;

You may as well use question with the
wolf

Why he hath made the ewe bleat for the
lamb;

You may as well forbid the mountain
pines

To wag their high tops and to make no
noise,

When they are fretten with the gusts of
heaven;

You may as well do anything most
hard,

As seek to soften that — than which
what's harder? —

His Jewish heart: therefore, I do beseech
you,

Make no more offers, use no further
means,

But with all brief and plain conveniency
Let me have judgment and the Jew his
will.

Bassanio. For thy three thousand
ducats here is six.

Antonio abandons the conflict.

Bassanio makes an appeal to
Shylock's avarice.



VINCENT M. THOMAS

Shylock. If every ducat in six thousand ducats
Were in six parts and every part a ducat,
I would not draw them; I would have my bond.

Duke. How shalt thou hope for mercy,
rend'ring none?

Shylock. What judgment shall I dread,
doing no wrong?
You have among you many a purchas'd slave.

Which, like your asses and your dog
and mules,
You use in abject and in slavish
parts,

Because you bought them: shall I say
to you,
Let them be free, marry them to your
heirs?

Why sweat they under burthens? let
their beds

Be made as soft as yours and let their
palates

Be season'd with such viands? You
will answer,

"The slaves are ours:" so do I answer
you:

The pound of flesh, which I demand of
him,

Is dearly bought; 'tis mine and I will
have it.

If you deny me, fie upon your law!

There is no force in the decrees of
Venice.

I stand for judgment: answer; shall I
have it?

Duke. Upon my power I may dismiss
this court,

Unless Bellario, a learned doctor,
Whom I have sent for to determine this,
Come here to-day.

Salerio. My lord, here stays with-
out

A messenger with letters from the doctor,
New come from Padua.

Duke. Bring us the letters; call the
messenger.

Bassanio. Good cheer, Antonio! What,
man, courage yet!

The Jew shall have my flesh, blood, bones
and all,

Ere thou shalt lose for me one drop of
blood.

Antonio. I am a tainted wether of the
flock,

Meetest for death: the weakest kind of
fruit

Drops earliest to the ground; and so let
me:

You cannot better be employ'd, Bas-
sanio,

Than to live still and write mine epi-
taph.

*Enter NERISSA, dressed like a lawyer's
clerk.*

Duke. Came you from Padua, from
Bellario?

Nerissa. From both, my lord. Bel-
lario greets your grace.

[Presenting a letter.]

Bassanio. Why dost thou whet thy
knife so earnestly?

Shylock. To cut the forfeiture from
that bankrupt there.

Gratiano. Not on thy sole, but on
thy soul, harsh Jew,

Hope is revived and the sus-
pense sustained by the refer-
ence to Bellario.

Interest is still further increased
by the announcement that the
messenger has arrived.

Note the contrast between Shy-
lock's attitude and that of
Bassanio.

The whetting of the knife sug-
gests physical conflict.

Thou mak'st thy knife keen; but no
metal can,

No, not the hangman's ax, bear half
the keenness

Of thy sharp envy. Can no prayers
pierce thee?

Shylock. No, none that thou hast
wit enough to make.

Gratiano. Oh, be thou damn'd, in-
exorable dog!

And for thy life let justice be accus'd.

Thou almost mak'st me waver in my
faith

To hold opinion with Pythagoras,
That souls of animals infuse themselves
Into the trunks of men: thy currish
spirit

Govern'd a wolf, who, hang'd for human
slaughter,

Even from the gallows did his fell soul
fleet,

And, whilst thou lay'st in thy unhal-
low'd dam,

Infus'd itself in thee; for thy desires
Are wolvisish, bloody, starv'd, and raven-
ous

Shylock. Till thou canst rail the seal
from off my bond,

Thou but offend'st thy lungs to speak
so loud:

Repair thy wit, good youth, or it will fall
To cureless ruin. I stand here for law.

Duke. This letter from Bellario doth
commend

A young and learned doctor to our court.
Where is he?

Nerissa. He attendeth here hard by,
To know your answer, whether you'll ad-
mit him

*Shylock continues to assert that
he stands upon his legal rights.*

Duke. With all my heart. Some three
or four of you
Go give him courteous conduct to this
place.
Meantime the court shall hear Bellario's
letter.

Clerk [Reads]. "*Your grace shall understand that at the receipt of your letter I am very sick: but in the instant that your messenger came, in loving visitation was with me a young doctor of Rome; his name is Balthasar. I acquainted him with the cause in controversy between the Jew and Antonio the merchant: we turn'd o'er many books together: he is furnished with my opinion; which, better'd with his own learning, the greatness whereof I cannot enough commend, comes with him, at my importunity, to fill up your grace's request in my stead. I beseech you, let his lack of years be no impediment to let him lack a reverend estimation; for I never knew so young a body with so old a head, I leave him to your gracious acceptance whose trial shall better publish his commendation.*"

Duke. You hear the learn'd Bellario,
what he writes:
And here, I take it, is the doctor come.

*Enter PORTIA, dressed like a doctor
of laws.*

Give me your hand. Came you from old
Bellario?

Portia. I did, my lord.

Duke. You are welcome: take your
place.
Are you acquainted with the difference

Note the care which is taken to
give Portia an effective entrance.

The sickness of Bellario gives
plausibility to Portia's presence,
and the fact that she is "furnished" with Bellario's
"opinion" renders her knowledge
of the law more probable.

The people in the play are not
aware of Portia's identity, but
there is no attempt to deceive
the audience, who, in the nature
of things, must recognize
her at once.

That holds this present question in the court?

Portia. I am informed thoroughly of the cause.

Portia immediately takes her place in the conflict.

Which is the merchant here, and which the Jew?

Duke. Antonio and old Shylock, both stand forth.

Portia. Is your name Shylock?

Shylock. Shylock is my name.

Portia. Of a strange nature is the suit you follow;

Yet in such rule that the Venetian law Cannot impugn you as you do proceed.

You stand within his danger, do you not?

Antonio. Ay, so he says.

Portia. Do you confess the bond?

Antonio. I do.

Portia. Then must the Jew be merciful.

Shylock. On what compulsion must I? tell me that.

Portia. The quality of mercy is not strain'd,

It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven Upon the place beneath: it is twice blest; It blesseth him that gives and him that takes:

'Tis mightiest in the mightiest: it becomes

The throned monarch better than his crown;

His scepter shows the force of temporal power,

The attribute to awe and majesty,

Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings;

But mercy is above this scepter'd sway;

It is enthroned in the hearts of kings,

There is economic significance in the fact that Portia, whose marriage has been made possible by Antonio's loan, should be the agent by whom Antonio is extricated from the disastrous consequences resulting from his act of generosity. The two meet now for the first time in the high light of dramatic contrast, when a life of happiness has been assured to one, and death faces the other.

It is an attribute to God himself;
And earthly power doth then show likest
God's

When mercy seasons justice. Therefore,
Jew,

Though justice be thy plea, consider this,
That, in the course of justice, none of us
Should see salvation: we do pray for
mercy;

And that same prayer doth teach us all
to render

The deeds of mercy. I have spoke thus
much

To mitigate the justice of thy plea;
Which if thou follow, this strict court of
Venice

Must needs give sentence 'gainst the
merchant there.

Shylock. My deeds upon my head!
I crave the law,

The penalty and forfeit of my bond.

Portia. Is he not able to discharge
the money?

Bassanio. Yes, here I tender it for
him in the court;

Yea, twice the sum: if that will not suffice,
I will be bound to pay it ten times o'er,
On forfeit of my hands, my head, my
heart:

If this will not suffice, it must appear
That malice bears down truth. And I
beseech you,

Wrest once the law to your authority:

To do a great right, do a little wrong,
And curb this cruel devil of his will.

Portia. It must not be; there is no
power in Venice

Can alter a decree established:

'Twill be recorded for a precedent,

It has been said that the play
"represents human life as a
great law-suit, with Shylock im-
personating revenge, and Por-
tia mercy." In this view of the
situation we may regard Portia
as testing Shylock's soul,
and pronouncing sentence only
when he has shown himself to
be incapable of a single hu-
mane impulse.

Observe how Portia prolongs the
suspense:
Her plea for mercy having proved
unavailing—
1. She rejects Bassanio's sup-
plication.

And many an error by the same example
Will rush into the state: it cannot be.

Shylock. A Daniel come to judgment
yea, a Daniel!

O wise young judge, how I do honor
thee!

Portia. I pray you, let me look upon
the bond.

Shylock. Here 'tis, most reverend doc-
tor, here it is.

Portia. Shylock, there's thrice thy
money offer'd thee.

Shylock. An oath, an oath, I have an
oath in heaven:

Shall I lay perjury upon my soul?

No, not for Venice . . .

Portia. Why, this bond is forfeit;
And lawfully by this the Jew may claim
A pound of flesh, to be by him cut off
Nearest the merchant's heart. Be merci-
ful:

Take thrice thy money; bid me tear the
bond.

Shylock. When it is paid according to
the tenor.

It doth appear you are a worthy judge;
You know the law, your exposition
Hath been most sound: I charge you by
the law,

Whereof you are a well-deserving pillar,
Proceed to judgment: by my soul I swear
There is no power in the tongue of man
To alter me: I stay here on my bond.

Antonio. Most heartily I do beseech
the court
To give the judgment.

Portia. Why then, thus it is:
You must prepare your bosom for
his knife.

2. She examines the bond and
declares it forfeit.

3. She bids Antonio prepare
for death.

Shylock. O noble judge! O excellent young man!

Portia. For the intent and purpose of the law

Hath full relation to the penalty,
Which here appeareth due upon the bond.

Shylock. 'Tis very true: O wise and upright judge!

How much more elder art thou than thy looks!

Portia. Therefore lay bare your bosom.

Shylock. Ay, his breast:
So says the bond: doth it not, noble judge?

"Nearest his heart:" those are the very words.

Portia. It is so. Are there balance here to weigh

The flesh?

Shylock. I have them ready.

Portia. Have by some surgeon, Shylock, on your charge,
To stop his wounds, lest he do bleed to death.

Shylock. Is it so nominated in the bond?

Portia. It is not so express'd: but what of that?

'Twere good you do so much for charity.

Shylock. I cannot find it; 'tis not in the bond.

Portia. You, merchant, have you anything to say?

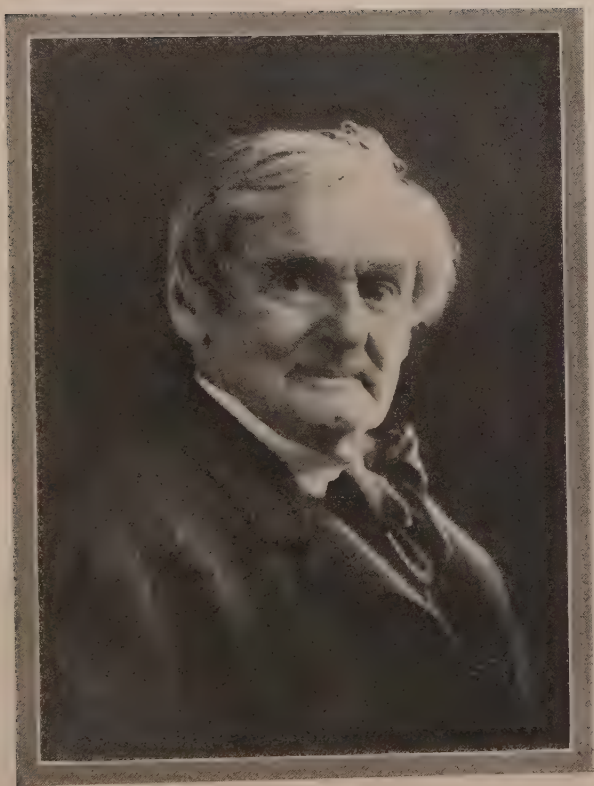
Antonio. But little: I am arm'd and well prepar'd.

Give me your hand, Bassanio: fare you well!

4. She calls for scales to weigh the flesh.

5. She orders a surgeon to stop Antonio's wounds.

The farewell speech of Antonio intensifies the suspense.



JOSEPH JEFFERSON

Grieve not that I am fallen to this for
you;

For herein Fortune shows herself more
kind

Than is her custom: it is still her use

To let the wretched man outlive his
wealth,

To view with hollow eye and wrinkled
brow

An age of poverty; from which ling'ring
penance

Of such a misery doth she cut me off

Commend me to your honorable wife:

Tell her the process of Antonio's end;

Say how I lov'd you, speak me fair in
death;

And, when the tale is told, bid her be
judge

Whether Bassanio had not once a love.

Repent not you that you shall lose your
friend,

And he repents not that he pays your
debt;

For if the Jew do cut but deep enough,

I'll pay it presently with all my heart.

Bassanio. Antonio, I am married to
a wife

Which is as dear to me as life itself;

But life itself, my wife, and all the world,

Are not with me esteem'd above thy life:

I would lose all, ay, sacrifice them all

Here to this devil, to deliver you.

Portia. Your wife would give you
little thanks for that,

If she were by, to hear you make the
offer.

Gratiano. I have a wife, whom, I
protest, I love:

I would she were in heaven, so she could

This bit of humorous by-play
inserted in the midst of a ser-
ious situation —

1. Exemplifies the principle of
contrast.

2. Makes it plain that Portia
has no misgivings as to the
outcome of the trial.

Entreat some power to change this cur-
rish Jew.

Nerissa. 'Tis well you offer it behind
her back;

The wish would make else an unquiet
house.

Shylock [*aside*]. These be the Chris-
tian husbands. I have a daughter;
Would any of the stock of Barrabas
Had been her husband rather than a
Christian!

We trifle time: I pray thee, pursue sen-
tence.

Portia. A pound of that same mer-
chant's flesh is thine:

The court awards it, and the law doth
give it.

Shylock. Most rightful judge!

Portia. And you must cut this flesh
from off his breast:

The law allows it, and the court awards
it.

Shylock. Most learned judge! A sen-
tence! Come, prepare!

Portia. Tarry a little; there is some-
thing else.

This bond doth give thee here no jot
of blood;

The words expressly are "a pound of
flesh:"

Take then thy bond, take thou thy pound
of flesh;

But, in the cutting it, if thou dost shed
One drop of Christian blood, thy lands
and goods

Are, by the laws of Venice, confiscate
Unto the state of Venice.

Gratiano. O upright judge! Mark,
Jew: O learned judge!

3. Emphasizes a personal rea-
son for Shylock's hatred of
Christians; namely, the elope-
ment of Jessica.

Portia ends the suspense at last.

The tension is relieved by the
mockery of Gratiano.

Shylock. Is that the law?

Portia. Thyself shalt see the
act:

For, as thou urgest justice, be assur'd
Thou shalt have justice, more than thou
desirest.

Gratiano. O learned judge! Mark,
Jew: a learned judge!

Shylock. I take his offer, then; pay
the bond thrice

And let the Christian go.

Bassanio. - Here is the money.

Portia. Soft!

The Jew shall have all justice; soft! no
haste:

He shall have nothing but the penalty.

Gratiano. O Jew! an upright judge,
a learned judge!

Portia. Therefore prepare thee to
cut off the flesh.

Shed thou no blood, nor cut thou less
nor more

But just a pound of flesh: if thou cutt'st
more

Or less than a just pound, be it but so
much

As makes it light or heavy in the sub-
stance

Or the division of the twentieth part
Of one poor scruple, nay, if the scale
do turn

But in the estimation of a hair,
Thou diest and all thy goods are con-
fiscate.

Gratiano. A second Daniel, a Daniel,
Jew!

Now, infidel, I have you on the hip.

Portia. Why doth the Jew pause?
take thy forfeiture.

Shylock. Give me my principal, and
let me go.

Bassanio. I have it ready for thee;
here it is.

Portia. He hath refus'd it in the open
court:

He shall have merely justice and his
bond.

Gratiano. A Daniel, still say I, a
second Daniel!

I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that
word.

Shylock. Shall I not have barely
my principal?

Portia. Thou shalt have nothing but
the forfeiture,

To be so taken at thy peril, Jew.

Shylock. Why, then the devil give
him good of it!

I'll stay no longer question.

Portia. Tarry, Jew:

The law hath yet another hold on you.

It is enacted in the laws of Venice,

If it be prov'd against an alien

That by direct or indirect attempts

He seek the life of any citizen,

The party 'gainst the which he doth con-
trive

Shall seize one half his goods; the other
half

Comes to the privy coffer of the state;

And the offender's life lies in the mercy

Of the duke only, 'gainst all other voice.

In which predicament, I say, thou stand'st;

For it appears, by manifest proceeding,

That indirectly and directly too

Thou hast contriv'd against the very life

Of the defendant; and thou hast incurr'd

The danger formerly by me rehears'd.

An ironical touch: Shylock has insisted that the letter of the bond must be maintained and Portia now turns his own weapons against him.

Just as the suspense was gradually increased and sustained while Shylock was apparently victor in the contest, so now, when he has become vanquished, punishment is meted out to him in the same cumulative fashion.

Down therefore and beg mercy of the duke.

Gratiano. Beg that thou mayst have leave to hang thyself:

And yet, thy wealth being forfeit to the state,

Thou hast not left the value of a cord;
Therefore thou must be hang'd at the state's charge.

Duke. That thou shalt see the difference of our spirit,

I pardon thee thy life before thou ask it:

For half thy wealth, it is Antonio's;
The other half comes to the general state,

Which humbleness may drive unto a fine.

Portia. Ay, for the state, not for Antonio.

Skylock. Nay, take my life and all;
pardon not that:

You take my house when you do take the prop

That doth sustain my house; you take my life

When you do take the means whereby I live.

Portia. What mercy can you render him, Antonio?

Gratiano. A halter gratis; nothing else, for God's sake.

Antonio. So please my lord the duke and all the court

To quit the fine for one half of his goods,
I am content; so he will let me have

The other half in use, to render it,
Upon his death, unto the gentleman

That lately stole his daughter:

Two things provided more, that, for this
favor,

He presently become a Christian;
The other, that he do record a gift,
Here in the court, of all he dies possess'd,
Unto his son Lorenzo and his daughter.

Duke. He shall do this, or else I do
recant

The pardon that I late pronounced here.

Portia. Art thou contented, Jew? what
dost thou say?

Shylock. I am content.

Portia. Clerk, draw a deed of
gift.

Shylock. I pray you, give me leave
to go from hence;

The conflict ends with Shylock's
utter rout.

I am not well: send the deed after me,
And I will sign it.

Duke. Get thee gone, but do it.

Gratiano. In christ'ning shalt thou
have two godfathers:

Had I been judge, thou shouldst have
had ten more,

To bring thee to the gallows, not the
font. *[Exit SHYLOCK.]*

Duke. Sir, I entreat you home with me
to dinner.

Portia. I humbly do desire your grace
of pardon:

I must away this night toward Padua,
And it is meet I presently set forth.

Duke. I am sorry that your leisure
serves you not.

Antonio, gratify this gentleman,
For, in my mind, you are much bound
to him.

[Exeunt DUKE and his train.]

Bassanio. Most worthy gentleman,
I and my friend

Have by your wisdom been this day
acquitted
Of grievous penalties; in lieu whereof,
Three thousand ducats, due unto the
Jew,
We freely cope your courteous pains
withal.

Antonio. And stand indebted, over
and above,
In love and service to you evermore.

Portia. He is well paid that is well
satisfied;
And I, delivering you, am satisfied
And therein do account myself well paid:
My mind was never yet more mercenary.
I pray you, know me when we meet again:
I wish you well, and so I take my leave.

Bassanio. Dear sir, of force I must
attempt you further:
Take some remembrance of us, as a trib-
ute,
Not as a fee: grant me two things, I pray
you,
Not to deny me, and to pardon me.

Portia. You press me far, and there-
fore I will yield.
[*To Antonio*] Give me your gloves, I'll
wear them for your sake;
[*To Bassanio*] And, for your love, I
take this ring from you:

Do not draw back your hand; I'll take
no more;
And you in love shall not deny me this.

Bassanio. This ring, good sir, alas,
it is a trifle!

I will not shame myself to give you this.
Portia. I will have nothing else but
only this;

And now methinks I have a mind to it.

The beginning of a new suspense.
When and how will Bassanio
learn who the "young doctor
of Rome" really is.

Bassanio. There's more depends on
this than on the value.

The dearest ring in Venice will I give you,
And find it out by proclamation:

Only for this, I pray you, pardon me.

Portia. I see, sir, you are liberal in
offers:

You taught me first to beg: and now
methinks

You teach me how a beggar should be
answer'd.

Bassanio. Good sir, this ring was
given me by my wife;

And when she put it on, she made me vow
That I should neither sell nor give nor
lose it.

Portia. That 'scuse serves many men
to save their gifts.

And if your wife be not a mad-woman,
And know how well I have deserv'd the ring,
She would not hold out enemy forever,
For giving it to me. Well, peace be
with you!

[*Exeunt* PORTIA and NERISSA.]

Antonio. My Lord Bassanio, let him
have the ring:

Let his deservings and my love withal
Be valued 'gainst your wife's command-
ment.

Bassanio. Go, Gratiano, run and over-
take him;

Give him the ring, and bring him, if
thou canst,

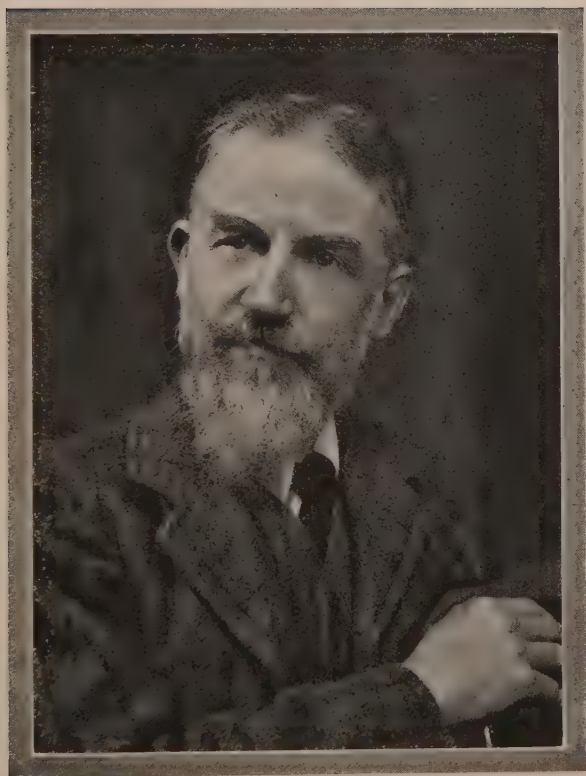
Unto Antonio's house: away! make haste.

[*Exit* GRATIANO.]

Come, you and I will thither presently;
And in the morning early will we both
Fly toward Belmont: come, Antonio.

[*Exeunt.*]

The dramatic strain is relaxed by
the introduction of the episode
of the ring, which later plays
its rôle in revealing the identity
of Portia and Nerissa.



GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

APPENDIX III

Albert Smith's Dramatization of
The Cricket on the Hearth

APPENDIX III

INTRODUCTORY

We have elsewhere noted that rules of construction are but the means to an end. It follows, therefore, that a transgression of even the most rigidly prescribed laws is justifiable if a higher end is attained thereby. Thus, in Albert Smith's dramatization of Dickens's *The Cricket on the Hearth*, the rule that the audience must always share the dramatic secret is violated in order that complete sympathy may be accorded John Perrybingle.

The play is here printed in full.

THE
CRICKET ON THE HEARTH

A DRAMA IN THREE ACTS

Dramatized by

ALBERT SMITH, ESQ.

CHARACTERS.

John Perrybingle, a carrier.

Mr. Tackleton, a toy maker.

Caleb Plummer, his man.

Old Gentleman.

Porter.

Dot's Father.

Dot.

Bertha, a blind girl.

Mrs. Fielding.

May Fielding.

Tilly Slowboy.

Mrs. Dot.

ACT I.

SCENE.— *The interior of JOHN PERRYBINGLE'S Cottage. A fire alight in the grate, on which is the kettle, practicable spout, to steam. Table and tea-things. Chairs by the fire. Cradle. Door L. Window with curtain furniture. At the rising of the curtain, music; TILLY SLOWBOY is sitting down on a low stool, nursing the baby. DOT is busy about.*

Dot. There! there's the ham — and there's the tea — and there's the bread! Now all is comfortable against John comes home. Dear me! if it had been for anybody else, how tired I should have been! and cross, too! oh! very cross! I'm sure there was enough to make me so. First, when I went to fill the kettle, I lost my pattens, and splashed my legs — that's hard to bear when one rather plumes one's self upon one's legs, and keeps one's self particularly neat in point of stockings. Then the lid of the kettle first turned itself topsy-turvy, and then dived sideways in, right down to the very bottom, and was as difficult to get up as if it had been the wreck of the Royal George! But now everything's right, and I can sit down for a minute in comfort and cheerfulness.

(Music. She sits down at the fireside.

The chirp of the CRICKET is heard — the kettle steams.)

Ah! there's the cricket on the hearth again. I thought it wouldn't be quiet long when the kettle began to sing. How its voice sounds through the house, and seems to twinkle in the outer darkness like a star. Why, I declare its racing with the kettle — trying to get before it! It can't, though; no, no — the kettle's not to be finished like that! How I love its fireside song of comfort; and John loves it, too. He says it always seems to say, "Welcome home, old fellow; welcome home, old boy!" He's very late to-night. Hush! I hear him. Yes. I'm sure it is. *(Rises.)* Give me baby, Tilly; I know it is John coming home!

Note the naturalness of the cricket's chirp and the artificiality of the music.

(*Music. She takes the baby from TILLY, and going to the door, opens it.*

Part of the cart is seen, with a lantern

— JOHN comes in, stamping with cold

— snow on him — he shakes his hat.)

Oh! goodness, John what a state you're in, with the weather.

(*Assists him to undress.*)

John. Why, you see, Dot, it — it ain't exactly summer weather, so no wonder. (*Puts down parcels.*)

Dot. I wish you wouldn't call me, Dot, John — I don't like it.

John (*drawing her to him*). Why, little woman, what else are you? A dot, and — (*looks at baby*) — a dot, and carry — no, I won't make a joke. I should only spoil it; I don't know that I was ever nearer one though?

Dot. You don't notice baby, John — ain't he beautiful? Now don't he look precious in his sleep?

John. Very! He generally *is* asleep — ain't he?

Dot. Lor! John! — good gracious — no!

John. Oh! I thought his eyes were generally shut. Holloa!

(*Shouts in baby's ear.*)

Dot. Goodness, John! how you startle one!

John. It ain't right for him to turn 'em up, in that way, is it? See how he's winking with 'em both at once? And look at his mouth! Why, he's gasping like a gold and silver fish!

Dot (*with dignity*). You don't deserve to be a father — you don't; but how should you know what little complaints babies are troubled with, John?

John. No — it's very true, Dot. I don't know much about it — I only know the wind's been blowing northeast, straight into the cart the whole way home. (*Beginning to take off his coat.*)

Dot. Poor old man! so it has. Here, take the precious darling, Tilly, while I make myself of some use. Bless it, I could smother it with kissing it, I could! Now see me bustle about, John, like a busy bee — "How doth the little" — and all the rest of it, you know, John. Did you ever learn "How doth the little" when you went to school, John?

John. Not quite to know it. I was very near it, once; but I should only have spoiled it, I dare say.

Dot (laughs). Ha! ha! what a dear old dunce you are, John, to be sure! Here, Tilly, take baby — and don't let him fall under the grate, whatever you do! (*At table.*) There! there's the tea-pot ready on the hob — and the cold knuckle of ham — and the crusty loaf — and there's the cricket!

John (having hung up his coat). Hey-day! it's merrier than ever to-night, I think. (*Goes to table.*)

Dot. And it's sure to bring us good fortune, John!

John. It always has done so. To have a cricket on the hearth is the luckiest thing in all the world.

Dot (sits by his side and takes his hand). The first time I heard its cheerful little note, John, was on that night when you brought me to my new home here, as its little mistress, nearly a year ago. You recollect, John?

The portrayal of John as a "dear old dunce" makes his later misunderstanding more probable, and appeals at once to the sympathy of the audience.

John. I should think so, Dot.

Dot. Its chirp was such a welcome to me! It seemed so full of promise and encouragement. It seemed to say you would be kind and gentle with me, and would not expect — I had a fear of that, John, then — to find an old head on the shoulders of your foolish little wife.

John (patting her). No, no — I was quite content to take them as they were.

Dot. It spoke the truth, John, when it seemed to say so — for you have ever been, I am sure, the best, the most considerate, the most affectionate of husbands to me. This has been a happy home, John, and I love the cricket for its sake!

John. Why, so do I, then — so do I, Dot!

Dot. I love it for the many times I have heard it, and the many thoughts its harmless music has given me. Sometimes, in the twilight, when I have felt a little solitary and down-hearted, John, before baby was here to keep me company, and make the house gay, when I have thought how lonely you would be if I should die, how lonely I should be if I could know that you had lost me, dear, its chirp, chirp, chirp upon the hearth has seemed to tell me of another little voice, so sweet, so very dear to me, before whose coming sound my trouble vanished like a dream. And when I used to fear — I did fear once, John, I was very young, you know — that ours might be an ill-assorted marriage; I being such a child and you more like my guardian than my husband; and that you might not, however

This fear of Dot's gives plausibility to John's later suspicions.

hard you tried, be able to learn to love me as you hoped and prayed you might — its chirp, chirp, chirp has cheered me up again, and filled me with new trust and confidence. I was thinking of these things to-night, dear, when I sat expecting you; and I love the cricket for their sake.

John. And so do I! But, Dot! I hope and pray that I might learn to love you? How you talk! I had learnt that long before I brought you here to be the cricket's little mistress, Dot.

(Kisses her, then she rises.)

Dot. There are not many parcels to-night, John. *(Goes to those he has put down.)* Why, what's this round box? Heart alive, John, it's a wedding cake.

John. Leave a woman alone to find out that! Now, a man would never have thought of it; whereas, it's my belief that if you was to pack a wedding cake up in a tea chest, or a turn-up bedstead, or a pickled salmon keg, or any unlikely thing, a woman would be sure to find it out directly. Yes, I called for it at the pastry cook's.

Dot (reading). Why, John — good gracious, John! you never mean to say its Gruff & Tackleton, the toy makers!

Til. (is dancing the baby). Was it Gruff & Tackleton's, the toy makers, then? and would it call at pastry cooks for wedding cakes — and did its mothers know the boxes, when its fathers brought them homes. Ketcher! ketcher! ketcher!

Dot (still looking at the parcel). And so, it's really come about! Why, she



RICHARD MANSFIELD

and I were girls at school together, John — and he's as old — as unlike her. How many years older is Gruff & Tackleton, John?

John (at the table). How many more cups of tea shall I drink to-night in one sitting than Gruff & Tackleton ever took in four, I wonder? Ah! as to eating, I eat but little; but that little I enjoy, Dot. Why, Dot! (*Raps with the knife on table*). Dot!

(*DOT has remained plunged in thought since she last spoke. She starts at the noise.*)

Dot. Lor' bless me, John! I beg your pardon, I was thinking. Ah! so these are all the parcels, are they, John?

John. That's all — why — no — I — (*Lays down knife and fork.*) — I declare — I've clean forgotten the old gentleman!

Dot. The old gentleman?

John. In the cart. He was asleep amongst the straw the last time I saw him. I've very nearly remembered him twice since I came in, but he went out of my head again. Halloo! yahip there! (*Goes out of the door.*) Rouse up there! — that's my hearty!

(*Music — TILLY looks alarmed, as she hears the words, "the old gentleman," and crossing to DOT runs against the STRANGER, with baby's head, as he enters, introduced by JOHN. The STRANGER removes his hat, and remains bareheaded in the centre of the room.*)

John. You are such an undeniable

good sleeper, sir, that I had a mind to ask you where the other six are, only that would be a joke and I know I should spoil it. Ha! ha! very near, though, very near!

(*Music*—*The STRANGER looks around him, and bows to JOHN and DOT gravely, then, striking a club he carries on the stage it falls asunder, and forms a species of camp-stool—he sits down on it.*)

Note the mysteriousness of the Stranger.

John. There! that's the way I found him, sitting by the roadside. Upright as a millstone, and almost as deaf.

Dot. Sitting in the open air, John?

John. In the open air, just at dusk. "Carriage paid," he said! and gave me eighteen pence. Then he got in; and there he is!

Stra. If you please, I was to be left till called for. Don't mind me.

(*He puts on a pair of large spectacles, takes a book from his pocket, and begins to read. JOHN and DOT look at him with astonishment.*)

(*To JOHN, nodding his head toward DOT.*)
Your daughter, my good friend?

John. Wife!

Stra. Niece!

John (loud). Wife!

Stra. Indeed; surely—very young!
(*Reads for an instant, then resumes.*)
Baby yours? (*JOHN and DOT nod eagerly.*)
Girl?

John (bawling). B—o—y!

Stra. Also very young—eh?

Dot (bawls in STRANGER'S ear). Two

months and three days! — vaccinated just six weeks ago! Took very finely — considered by the doctor a remarkably fine child — equal to the general run of children at five months old — takes notice in a way quite wonderful — may seem impossible to you, but feels his legs already! (*A knocking at the door.*)

John. Hark! he's called for, sure enough! There's somebody at the door — open it, Tilly.

(*Music — TILLY goes to the door, opens it, and lets in CALEB in his sackcloth coat.*)

Cal. Good evening, John! good evening, mum! good evening, Tilly — good evening, unbeknown! How's baby, mum? Boxer's pretty well, I hope?

Dot. All thriving, Caleb! I am sure you need only to look at the dear child, for one to know that.

Cal. And I'm sure I need only look at you, for another — or at John, for another — or at Tilly, as far as that goes.

John. Busy just now, Caleb?

Cal. Why, pretty well, John — this is a good time of year for the toy business. There's rather a run upon Noah's arks, just at present. I wish I could improve Noah's family — but I don't see how it's to be done at the price. It would be satisfaction to one's mind to make it clearer which was Shems and Hams, and which was wives. Flies ain't on that scale neither, as compared with the elephant, you know. Ah, well! have you got anything in the parcel line for me, John?

(JOHN goes to L. and searches his coat pocket, and brings out a little plant in a flower-pot, packed up.)

John. There it is! not so much as a leaf damaged — full of buds! It was very dear, though, Caleb, at this season.

Cal. Never mind that; it would be cheap to me whatever it cost. Anything else, John?

John. A small box — here you are!
(Gives box.)

Cal. (spelling). "For Caleb Plummer, with cash." With cash, John? I don't think it's for me.

John. With care. Where do you make out "cash?"

Cal. Oh! to be sure. It's all right — "With care?" Yes, yes, that's mine. Ah! if my dear boy in the golden South Americas had lived, John, it might have been cash indeed! You loved him like a son, didn't you? You needn't say you did — I know, of course. (Reads.) "Caleb Plummer, with care." Yes, yes; for my poor blind daughter's work — it's a box of doll's eyes. I wish it was her own sight in a box, John.

John. I wish it was, or could be.

Cal. Thank'ee, you speak very hearty. To think she should never see the dolls, and them a staring at her bold all day long. That's where it cuts. What's the damage, John?

John. I'll damage you, if you inquire. Dot, nearly a joke; very near, wasn't it? Stop, Caleb — here's something for your governor, old Gruff & Tackleton.

Cal. He hasn't been here, has he?

Anticipation; but very guarded, since the identity of the Stranger is not to be revealed to the audience till the *dénouement*.

John. Not he, he's too busy, courting.

Cal. He's coming round though — he told me so. He isn't a pleasant man, is he, John? though he does sell toys. 'Pon my honor I think he only likes to sell those that make children uncomfortable. He makes all the grim faces to the brown paper farmers who drive the pigs. And if you knew how he reveled in those hideous, hairy, red-eyed jacks in boxes. Oh! he loves them. I think I'd better go. By the bye, you couldn't have the goodness to let me pinch Boxer's tail, mum, for half a moment, could you?

Dot. Why, Caleb, what a question.

Cal. Oh! never mind, mum; he mightn't like it, perhaps. There's a small order just come in for barking dogs, and I should wish to go as close to nature as I could for sixpence. That's all, never mind, mum; good-bye!

(He puts the box on his shoulder, and is going out, when he is met by TACKLETON on the threshold.)

Tac. (entering). Oh! here you are, are you? Wait a bit; I'll take you home. John Perrybingle, my service to you; more of my service to your pretty wife. Handsomer every day! Better, too, if possible. *(Aside.)* And younger, there's the devil of it.

Dot. I should be astonished at your paying compliments, Mr. Tackleton, but for your condition.

Tac. Oh! you know all about it, then?

Dot. I have got myself to believe it somehow.

Tac. After a very hard struggle, I suppose.

Dot. Very.

Tac. In three days' time; next Thursday, that's to be my wedding-day.

John. Why, it's our wedding-day, too.

Tac. Ha! ha! Odd! You're just such another couple, just!

Dot (half aside). What next? He'll say just another such baby, perhaps. The man's mad.

Tac. (to JOHN). I say, a word with you. You'll come to the wedding — we're in the same boat, you know.

John. How in the same boat?

Tac. (nudging him). A little disparity, you know. Come and spend an evening with us, beforehand.

John. Why?

Tac. Why? That's a new way of receiving an invitation! Why, for pleasure, sociability, you know, and all that.

John. I thought you were never sociable.

Tac. Tchah! It's of no use to be anything but free with you, I see. Why, then the truth is, you have a — what the tea-drinking people call a — a sort of comfortable appearance together, you and your wife. We know better, you know better, but —

John. No, we *don't* know better. What are you talking about?

Tac. Well, we *don't* know better, then; as you like; what does it matter? I was going to say, as you have a sort of an appearance, your company will produce a favorable effect on Mrs. Tackleton that will be.

Contrast between the marriage of John and Dot and the intended marriage of Tackleton and May.

John. We've made a promise to ourselves, these six months, to keep our wedding-day at home. We think you see that home.

Tac. Bah! what's home? (*Cricket is heard.*) Four walls, and a ceiling! Why don't you kill that cricket! I would; I always do! I hate their noise.

John. You kill your crickets, eh?

Tac. Scrunch 'em, sir. You'll say you'll come! because you know whatever one woman says, another woman is determined to clinch always. There's that spirit of emulation among 'em, sir, that if your wife says to my wife, "I'm the happiest woman in the world, and mine's the best husband in the world, and I dote on him!" my wife will say the same to yours, or more; and *half believe it*.

John. Do you mean to say she don't, then?

Tac. Don't Ha! ha — don't what?

John. Pshaw! that she don't believe it!

Tac. You're joking. I have the humor, sir, to marry a young wife, and a pretty wife — I am able to gratify that humor, and I do — it's my whim. But now, look there! (*Points to DOT, who is sitting at the fire.*) She honors and obeys, no doubt, you know; and that, as I am not a man of sentiment, is quite enough for *me*. But do you think there's anything more in it?

John. I think I should chuck any man out of window who said there wasn't.

Tac. Exactly so. We're exactly alike in reality, I see. Good-night! You won't give us to-morrow evening? Well,

next day you go visiting, I know. I'll meet you there, and bring my wife that is to be. It'll do you good. Good night!

(As he is going, DOT gives a loud shriek, starts up from her seat, and remains transfixed with terror and surprise. Picture. Music.)

John. Dot! Mary, darling! what's the matter? Are you ill? *(He supports her.)* What is it? Tell me, dear.

(STRANGER rises, and stands.)

(DOT falls into a fit of hysterical laughter, clasps her hands together and sinks upon the ground.)

What is this, Mary? my own little wife — speak to me!

Dot *(recovering)*. I'm better, John — I'm quite well — now — I — a kind of shock — something came suddenly before my eyes — I don't know what it was — it's quite gone — quite gone.

Tac. I'm glad it's gone! — I wonder where it's gone, and what it was? Humph! Caleb, come here — who's that, with the gray hair? *(Points to STRANGER.)*

Cal. I don't know, sir. Never seen him before, in all my life. A beautiful figure for a nut-cracker — quite a new model — with a screw jaw opening down into his waistcoat, he'd be lovely!

Tac. Not ugly enough.

Cal. Or for a firebox, either — what a model! Unscrew his head, to put the matches in — turn him heels upward for a light — and what a fire-box for a gentleman's mantel-piece, just as he stands!

Tac. Not half ugly enough! Come, bring that box — all right now, I hope!

The mystery increases. It is evident that Dot's agitation is due to the presence of the Stranger, but no hint is given the audience as to who the Stranger is, or what brings him to Dot's home.

Dot (hurriedly). Oh! quite gone — quite gone! — Good night!

Tac. Good night! — Good night, John Perrybingle!

John. Stop! — this good gentleman may be glad of company — I must give him a hint to go!

Stra. (rises and advances toward JOHN). I beg your pardon, friend — the more so, as I fear your wife has not been well — but the attendant whom my infirmity (*points to his ears*) renders almost indispensable not having arrived, I fear there must be some mistake. The bad night is still as bad as ever. Would you, in your kindness, suffer me to rent a bed here?

Dot (eagerly). Yes, yes, certainly.

John. Oh! well, I don't object; but still, I'm not quite sure that —

Dot. Hush, dear John!

Tac. Hush! why, he's stone deaf! — Odd! (*to JOHN*) isn't it?

Dot. I know he is, but — yes, sir — certainly — there's the spare room, and the bed ready made up!

Tac. Well, now I'm off! Good night, John — good night, Mrs. Perrybingle! Take care, Caleb; let that box fall, and I'll murder you!

Dot (to STRANGER). This way, sir — this is your room!

(*She takes a candle, and beckons the STRANGER to an apartment at the side. TACKLETON, who is going, preceded by CALEB, turns back, and laying his hand on JOHN'S shoulder, points toward his wife and the STRANGER. The curtain falls to the music of the commencement.*)

Dot's eagerness to have the Stranger remain indicates her knowledge of his identity, and the fact that she conceals that knowledge from John naturally creates sympathy for him in the minds of the audience. For the playwright to reveal to the audience the secret which Dot has discovered would be to risk losing that sympathy which is absolutely essential in order to sustain interest in the acts that follow.

ACT II.

SCENE.— *The abode of CALEB PLUMMER — a poor, half-tumbling down interior. A dresser on which some common, broken crockery is placed. The room is filled with toys of all descriptions, especially dolls' houses and dolls. There are movable sand toys, and musical carts, fiddles, drums, weapons, Noah's arks, horses, etc., etc. CALEB'S coat hung up. As the curtain rises CALEB is discovered making a baby house. He sings:*

"The glasses sparkle on the board,
The wine is ruby bright," etc., etc.

Ah! me, my voice seems to get fainter and fainter every day. I'm often afraid that my poor blind child will perceive it, and then I shall not be able to make her believe that I am still young and lively by my songs. Poor Bertha! yet I often think her blindness may be a blessing. She never knew that the walls are blotched, and bare of plaster, or that the iron is rusting, the wood rotting, and the paper peeling off. If my poor boy had lived to come back from the golden South Americas, how different it would have been. She knows not now that Tackleton is a cold and exacting master. Poor girl, I have made her believe by a little affectionate artifice that all his harsh and unfeeling reproofs are meant in joke to enliven us — and she thinks he is our guardian angel, and she imagines her

This secret the audience shares.

Anticipation, but still very guarded.



DAVID BELAND

poor old father to be a man still young and handsome. Hush! Caleb, she is here!

(*Music — The door opens — CALEB rises and goes toward it. BERTHA enters and feels her way to the spot where he was sitting. He takes her hand.*)

Cal. Bertha.

Ber. Father. So you were out in the rain last night in your beautiful new great coat.

Cal. (*looking at his coat and shrugging his shoulders*). In my beautiful new great coat.

Ber. How glad I am you bought it, father.

Cal. And of such a fashionable tailor, too, it's too good for me.

Ber. Too good for you, father; what can be too good for you?

Cal. I'm half ashamed to wear it, though, upon my word. When I hear the boys and people behind me say, "Holloa! here's a swell!" I don't know which way to look. And when the beggar wouldn't go away last night, and when I said I was a very common man, said, "No, your honor; bless your honor, don't say that," I was quite ashamed. I really felt as if I hadn't a right to wear it.

Ber. (*clapping her hands with delight*). I see you, father, as plainly as if I had the eyes I never want when you are with me. A blue coat.

Cal. Bright blue.

Ber. Yes, yes; bright blue! the color I can just remember in the blessed sky. A bright blue coat.

Cal. Made loose to the figure.

Ber. Yes, loose to the figure —
(*laughing*) — and in it you, dear father,
with your merry eye, your smiling face,
your free step, and your dark hair,
looking so young and handsome —

Cal. Halloa! — halloa! I shall be
vain, presently.

Ber. Not at all, dear father, not at
all. But I am idling; I can talk just as
well whilst I am at work.

(*Feels about for her basket, finds it,
and begins to dress some dolls.*)

Cal. (*taking up the dolls' house*). There
we are, as near the real thing as sixpenn-
'orth of halfpence is to sixpence. What
a pity that the whole front of the house
opens at once. If there was only a stair-
case in it, now, and regular doors to the
rooms to go in at — but that's the worst
of my calling. I'm always deluding my-
self and swindling myself.

(*In a low tone.*)

Ber. You are speaking quite softly;
you are not tired, father?

Cal. Tired! What could tire me,
Bertha? I was never tired. What does
it mean? (*Sings with forced energy.*)

"We'll drown it in a bowl!

We'll drown it in a bowl," etc., etc.

(*As he is singing TACKLETON enters.*)

Tac. What, you're singing, are you?
Go it — *I* can't sing — *I* can't afford
it — I'm glad you can. I hope you can
afford to work, too. Hardly time for
both, I should think.

Cal. (to BERTHA). If you could only see him, Bertha, how he's winking at me. Such a man to joke. You'd think, if you didn't know him, he was in earnest; wouldn't you, now?

(BERTHA *nods assent.*)

Tac. The bird that can sing, and won't sing, must be made to sing, they say. What about the owl that can't sing, and oughtn't to sing, and will sing — is there anything that *he* should be made to do?

Cal. (*aside to BERTHA*). The extent to which he's winking at this moment! Oh! my gracious!

Ber. Always merry and light-hearted with us, Mr. Tackleton.

Tac. Oh — there you are, are you? Poor idiot! — Umph! — well — and being there, how are you?

Ber. Oh! well — quite well; as happy as ever you can wish me to be; as happy as you would make the whole world if you could. (*Rising.*)

Tac. Poor idiot! no gleam of reason; not a gleam.

(BERTHA, *who does not hear him, takes TACKLETON'S hand and presses it to her lips.*)

What's the matter now?

Ber. I stood the little plant you sent me close beside my pillow when I went to sleep last night, and remembered it in my dreams; and when the day broke and the glorious red sun — father — the red sun —

Cal. Red in the mornings and evenings Bertha. (*Aside.*) Poor thing! I must

Note the contrast between Tackleton's real character and Bertha's conception of him.

deceive her still, to make her believe he is less harsh and cold.

Ber. When the sun rose, and the bright light — I almost fear to strike myself against it in walking — came into the room, I turned the little plant toward it, and blessed Heaven for making things so precious, and blessed you for sending them to cheer me.

Tac. (*aside*). Bedlam broke loose! We shall arrive at the straight waistcoat and mufflers soon; we're getting on. Ugh! Bertha, come here. Shall I tell you a secret?

Ber. If you will.

Tac. This is the day on which little What's her-name — the spoiled child — Perrybingle's wife pays her regular visit to you — makes her fantastic picnic here — isn't it?

Ber. Yes; this is the day.

Tac. I thought so; I should like to join the party.

Ber. (*gladly*). Do you hear that, father?

Cal. Yes, yes, I hear it, but I don't believe it. It's one of my lies, no doubt.

Tac. You see, I want to bring the Perrybingles a little more into company with May Fielding. I am going to be married to May.

Ber. Married!

Tac. (*muttering*). She's such a confounded idiot that I was afraid she'd never comprehend me. (*Aloud.*) Yes; married! — church, parson, clerk, beadle, glass coach, bells, breakfast, bridecake, favors, marrowbones, cleavers, and all the rest of the tomfoolery. A wedding,

you know; a wedding! Don't you know what a wedding is?

Ber. I know; I understand.

Tac. Do you? It's more than I expected. Well, I want to join the party, and to bring May and her mother. I'll send in a little something or other before the afternoon; a cold leg of mutton, or some comfortable trifle of that sort. You'll expect me.

Ber. Yes. (*Turns away, and her head droops.*)

Observe the result of Caleb's deception.

Tac. I don't think you will, for you seem to have forgotten all about it already. Caleb!

Cal. (*to himself*). I may venture to say I'm here, I suppose. (*Aloud.*) Sir!

Tac. Take care she don't forget what I've been saying to her.

Cal. *She* never forgets. It's one of the few things *she* ain't clever in.

Tac. Every man thinks his own geese swans. Well, good-bye! — umph! — poor devil! (*Exit.*)

Cal. (*to himself, taking up a toy wagon and horses, which he proceeds to put harness on*). Phew! I'm glad he's gone. (*Sings.*) "The glasses sparkle," etc.

Ber. (*puts her hand on his shoulder*). Father, I am lonely in the dark; I want my eyes — my patient, willing eyes.

Cal. Here they are; always. They are more yours than mine, Bertha. What shall your eyes do for you, dear?

Ber. Look round the room, father.

Cal. All right; no sooner said than done, Bertha.

Ber. Tell me about it.

Cal. It's much the same as usual; homely, but very snug. The gay colors on the walls — the bright flowers on the plates and dishes — the shining wood, where there are beams and panels — the general cheerfulness and neatness of the building make it very pretty.

Ber. You have your working dress on — and are not so gallant as when you wear the handsome coat!

(Touches him.)

Cal. Not quite so gallant. Pretty brisk, though!

Ber. *(putting her hand around his neck).* Father, tell me something about May — she is very beautiful?

Cal. She is, indeed.

Ber. Her hair is dark — darker than mine. Her voice is sweet and musical, I know. I have often loved to hear it. Her shape —

Cal. There's not a doll's in all the room to equal it; and her eyes.

Ber. *(sadly).* Her eyes, father —
(Hides her face, and head sinks on his arm.)

Cal. *(aside).* Fool that I was! *(Sings.)*
"We'll drown it in a bowl!"

Ber. But Mr. Tackleton — our kind, noble friend, father — he's older than May?

Cal. *(hesitating).* Y-e-e-es—he's a little older, but that don't signify —

Ber. Oh! father, yes! To be his patient companion in infirmity and age — to be his gentle nurse in sickness, and his constant friend in suffering and sorrow — to sit beside his bed, and talk to him awake, and pray for him asleep! Would she do all this, dear father?

Compare Caleb's description with the description of the stage setting at the beginning of Act II.

Cal. No doubt of it!

Ber. — I love her, father; I can love her from my soul.

(Clings to him and is affected.)

Cal. Come, Bertha — cheerily! cheerily! I declare, all the dolls are staring at us as if they were mad with hunger, to remind us that our company will be here soon. Come, Bertha — let us go and see about the potatoes in that handsome wooden bowl that is so beautiful to look at — come, come!

In the case of Caleb's deception the sympathy of the audience is better secured by a complete understanding of the situation.

(Music — They exeunt at R. The tune changes to "Gee ho, Dobbin!" and the door opens. Enter MRS. FERRY-BINGLE, carrying all sorts of parcels, followed by JOHN, doing the same — and lastly, TILLY carrying the baby.)

Dot. Nobody here to receive us — and nobody come yet! Never mind; we're not proud, John, are we?

(Undoing bonnet, etc.)

John. Well, I don't know, Dot; I'm proud of you when you're admired, knowing that you don't mind it.

(Pulling off great coat.)

Dot. Now, John —

John. In fact, that you rather like it, perhaps.

Dot. Now, hush, John! I'm sure I'm only proud of our cart; and who wouldn't be? and Boxer.

John. And just getting into the cart — the legs, Dot, eh?

Dot. Now, John, how can you! Think of Tilly. And are you sure you've got the basket with the veal, and ham pie, and things — and the bottles of

beer? Because if you haven't, we must go back.

John. You're a nice little article, to talk about going back when you kept me a quarter of an hour after time! They're all right!

Dot. I declare I wouldn't come without the veal and ham pie, and things, and the bottles of beer, for any money! Regularly, once a fortnight, since we have been married, John, we've made our little picnic here. If anything were to go wrong with it, I should almost think we were never going to be lucky again!

John. It was a kind thought, in the first instance, and I honor you for it, little woman.

Dot. My dear John! don't talk of honoring me — my gracious!

John. By the by — that old gentleman — he's an odd fish — I can't make him out — I don't believe there's any harm in him.

Dot. Not at all — I'm sure there's none at all.

John (with meaning). I'm glad you feel so certain — because it's a confirmation to me. It's curious he should have taken it into his head to ask leave to go on lodging with us, ain't it? Things come about so strangely.

Dot (almost aside). So very strangely.

John. However, he's a good natured old gentleman and pays as a gentleman, doesn't he? Why, Dot! what are you thinking about?

Dot (starting). Thinking of, John! I — I was listening to you.

John. Oh! that's all right. I was

The mystery increases, and still
John is unsuspecting.

afraid from the look of your face I had set you thinking about something else.

Dot. Oh! no, John, no! But here comes Caleb and Bertha! now they shall help us put the veal and ham pie and things, and bottles of beer, all in order!

(Enter CALEB and BERTHA, R.)

Cal. Halloa, John! here you are then! and missus, too. How d'ye do, mum?

Ber. *(going to DOT).* Dear Mary!

Cal. The rest of the company will be here directly. The potatoes is all right — you never see such picturs — I don't think I could make any half so natural, not if dolls wouldn't have nothing else in their kitchens. Ah! *(A knock.)* There's May and her mother, and Gruff & Tackleton! Come in — come in!

(Enter TACKLETON with MAY FIELDING on one arm, and MRS. FIELDING on the other, wearing a calash over her cap, which is very fine. TACKLETON is carrying a parcel. CALEB receives them awkwardly.)

Tac. Well, we're come. I can't suppose you wanted me much, though.

Dot *(going to MAY).* May! my dear old friend! what a happiness to see you!

(They embrace.)

Tac. Ah! that's it — women always are so deuced affectionate before people — it's all trick — only to make us envious don't you think so, Perrybingle?

John. No, I don't! I call that as pleasant a sight as a man might see in a long day. Their faces quite set one

another's off. They ought to have been born sisters.

May (to *BERTHA*). And are you quite well and happy, Bertha?

Ber. Quite, dear May! How can I be otherwise when you are here?

Cal. Bless me! I'm quite nervous; I feel as if somebody was pulling a string and making me jump all ways at once. I'll go and get the potatoes. (*Exit R.*)

Tac. There, there's a leg of mutton. (*Puts it on table.*) And there's a tart. Ah! you may stare, but we don't mind a little dissipation when our brides are in the case. I haven't been married a year, you know, John.

Dot (*aside*). Spiteful creature.

John. Come, let us begin dinner. (*Placing the chairs.*) You have not driven along the road three or four miles; I'm hungry.

Cal. (*enters with a bowl of smoking potatoes, R.*) You shan't be long, John, you shan't be long. There they are — look at 'em — it's almost a shame to eat 'em. Now, sit down, sit down. You there, mum, if you please — (*To MRS. FIELDING.*) — and you there — (*To TACKLETON.*) Perhaps, too, sir, you'd like May next you — it's natural you should. And, Mrs. Perrybingle, you'll go to the side of your old friend, John here; and Bertha next to me. There we are, beautiful!

Dot. Oh! how comfortable this is! It seems but yesterday, May, that we were at school; and now to think you are quite a woman grown!

May. And you, Dot — married!



DAVID WARFIELD

John. Yes; and got a baby!

Dot. Now, John!

John. Well! is it anything to be ashamed of? I always thought ——

Dot (*interrupting him*). You dear, good, awkward John; there, take some pie, and there's a nice bit of egg! And now don't talk with your mouth full!

Cal. But you, May; you don't eat anything.

Dot. Oh! May's in love, you know, Caleb; and people in love are never hungry. Bless you, it wouldn't be proper; I never was.

Tac. Perhaps you were never in love. Ha! ha!

Dot (*imitating his hollow laugh*). Ha! ha! what a funny man you are. (*Aside.*) He looks about as much in his own element as a fresh young salmon on the top of the pyramid!

Mrs. F. (*gravely*). Ah! girls are girls, and by-gones by-gones; and as long as young people are young and thoughtless, they'll behave as young and thoughtless people do.

Dot. Dear May, to talk of those merry school-days makes one young again.

Tac. Why you ain't particularly old at any time, are you?

Dot. Look at my sober, plodding husband, there. He adds twenty years to my age, at least; don't you, John?

John. Forty!

Dot. How many you'll add to May's I'm sure I don't know; but she can't be less than a hundred years of age on her next birthday.

Tac. Ha! ha! (*Aside.*) I could twist her neck like a sparrow's.

Dot. Dear, dear, only to remember how we used to talk at school about the husbands we should choose. I don't know how handsome and young, and how gay and how lively mine was to be. And as to May's; oh! dear: I don't know whether to laugh or cry, when I think what silly girls we were.

Tac. Ah! you couldn't help yourselves; for all that you couldn't resist us, you see. Here we are! here we are! Where are your gay young bridegrooms now?

Dot. Some of them are dead, and some of them forgotten. Some of them, if they could stand among us at this moment, would not believe we were the same creatures, or that we could forget them so. No, no, they would not believe one word of it.

John. Why, Dot, little woman, what are you thinking of? Come, come, I think we are slighting the bottled beer. I'll give a toast. "Here's to to-morrow (*they pass the beer around*) the wedding-day;" and we'll drink a bumper to it.

Cal. Yes, the wedding-day.

All. The wedding-day; the wedding-day.

(*BERTHA gets up and leaves the table.*)

John. Well, this is all very well; but I must be stirring. I have got several parcels to deliver now.

Cal. But you won't be long, John?

John. Oh! no; the old horse has had a bait as well as myself, and we shall soon get over the ground.

The audience not only understand how Caleb has deceived Bertha, but they see what Caleb has not yet seen; namely, that the result of his deception in regard to Tackleton has led Bertha to love the unworthy toy merchant.

Cal. Well, good-bye, John.

John. Good-bye — good-bye, all!
(*To baby.*) Good-bye, young shaver.
Time will come, I suppose, when you'll
turn out into the cold, my little friend,
and leave your old father to enjoy his
pipe and his rheumatics in the chimney-
corner — eh! where's Dot?

Dot (*starting*). I'm here, John.

John (*claps his hands*). Come, come,
where's the pipe?

Dot. I forgot the pipe, John. I'll fill
it directly.

(*Takes the pipe from his coat.*)

John. Forgot the pipe! Was such
a wonder ever heard of? Why, what a
clumsy Dot you are this afternoon.
I could have done it better myself, I
verily believe.

Tac. I'll go with you, John Perry-
bingle, a little way if you'll take me.
I've got to go down the town.

John. Oh! willingly, willingly! Good-
bye, Caleb; good-bye, all! I shall be
back very soon.

All. Good bye, John!

(*Exeunt JOHN and TACKLETON.*)

Dot. And now, Tilly, bring me the
precious baby — and whilst you help
May put the things to rights, and do
everything she tells you, I shall sit with
Mrs. Fielding at the fire.

Mrs. F. I should have sat by fire-
places of a very different kind if people had
done by other people as the first people
ought to do, especially in the Indigo trade.

Dot (*shaking her head*). Ah, I'm
sure you would.

Mrs. F. But when a friend asks any one to befriend that friend's friend, and the friend's friend does not act as such, we must put up with what other friends have to offer us.

Dot. Yes, it's very true, ma'am. But now (*pushing a chair*) sit down here, and while baby is in my lap, perhaps you will tell me how to manage it, and put me right upon twenty points where I am as wrong as can be. Won't you, Mrs. Fielding?

Mrs. F. I see no objection; although before that occurrence with the Indigo, which I always thought would happen and told Mr. F. so often, but he wouldn't believe me, I never managed my babies at all, but had proper persons, whom we paid. My husband was quite enough for me to manage.

Dot. Ah, I should think so.

(*DOT seats herself upon a stool with baby, near the fire, and close to MRS. FIELDING. MAY and TILLY are putting the room to rights. CALEB and BERTHA come forward.*)

Cal. Bertha, what has happened? How changed you are my darling, and in so short a time. What is it? Tell me.

Ber. (*bursts into tears*). Oh! father — father — my hard, hard fate!

Cal. But think how cheerful, and how happy you have been, Bertha! How good and how much loved by many people, although I know, to be — to be blind, is a great affliction — but —

Ber. I have never felt it in its fulness.

Oh! my good, gentle father, bear with me, if I am wicked. This is not the sorrow that so weighs me down.

Cal. (aside). I cannot understand her. What does this mean?

Ber. Bring her to me. May — bring May. (*MAY, hearing it, comes toward her and touches her arm. BERTHA seizes her by the hands.*) Look into my face, dear heart, sweet heart! Read it with your beautiful eyes, and tell me if truth is written on it?

May. Dear Bertha, yes.

Ber. There is not in my soul a wish, or thought, that is not for your good, bright May. Every blessing on your head light upon your happy course! not the less, my dear May — not the less, my bird — because, to-day, the knowledge that you are to be *his* wife has wrung my heart almost to breaking.

Cal. Is it possible — she loves him, then — Tackleton!

Ber. Father — May — Mary! Oh! forgive me that it is so, for the sake of all he has done to relieve the weariness of my dark life, and for the sake of the belief you have in me, when I call Heaven to witness that I could not wish him married to a wife more worthy of his goodness.

Cal. Gracious Heaven! is it possible! Have I deceived her from her cradle to break her heart at last!

Dot (who has been listening, advances). Come, come, dear Bertha! come away with me. Give her your arm, May — so! — how composed she is, you see, already, and how good it is of her to mind us. (*Kisses her.*) There, dear — come and

An ironical situation: Caleb's deception defeats its own end.

sit by us. Stop; I hear some footsteps I know.

Ber. (*starts*). Whose — step is that?

Cal. Whose — why, it's John's.

(*Enter JOHN.*)

Dot. Why, John — how soon you have returned.

John. Well — ain't you glad of it, Dot! I met young Hobbins in the street, and he is going to take the cart on, and call for us on his way back.

Ber. But whose is the other's step — that of a man's — behind you?

Cal. She's not to be deceived.

John. Why, who should I overtake, but our old deaf gentleman, who'd been up town to buy some things; so I brought him along with me. Come along, sir, you'll be welcome, never fear! — (*The STRANGER enters.*) — He's not so much a stranger that you haven't seen him once, Caleb. You'll give him house-room till we go?

Cal. Oh! surely, John; and take it as an honor.

John. He's the best company on earth to talk secrets in. I have reasonable good lungs, but he tries 'em, I can tell you. Sit down, sir. All friends here, and glad to see you.

Cal. What can we do to entertain him, John?

John. Oh! nothing! A chair in the corner, and leave to sit quite silent and look pleasantly about him, is all he cares for. He's easily pleased. (*Leads the STRANGER to a chair, BERTHA and MAY are talking; so also, DOT and MRS. FIELD-*

ING — *to DOT.*) A clumsy Dot she was, this afternoon; and yet I like her, somehow. See yonder, Dot!

(*Points to STRANGER.*)

Dot. Well, John (*confused*), what is there, there? (*Aside.*) Can he suspect anything?

John. He's — Ha, ha, ha! he's full of admiration for you! talks of nobody else.

Dot. I wish he had a better subject, John.

John. A better subject: there's no such thing; come off with the heavy wrappers and a cozy half hour by the fire. (*To MRS. FIELDING.*) My humble service, mistress. A game at cribbage, you and I? That's hearty: the cards and board, Dot. And a glass of beer here, if there's any left, small wife.

Dot. Yes, John, plenty!

(*MAY arranges the table and cards, whilst DOT gets the beer.*)

(*TACKLETON enters at the door.*)

Mrs. F. That's quite right, my dear! Thank Heaven, I have always found May a dutiful child, though I say it, that ought not, and an excellent wife she will make.

Tac. Well, I don't doubt that.

Mrs. F. And with regard to our family, though we are reduced in purse — I don't say this, sir, out of regard to what we are to play for — but though we are reduced in purse, we have always had some pretensions to gentility.

John. Which nobody doubts, who knows you, mum, or May either. There's a good Dot. (*DOT brings beer.*) And

now we will cut for deal. (*Cuts.*)
Seven!

Mrs. F. Nine!

John. Ah! you are fortunate, mistress.

(*The STRANGER, who has been exchanging looks with DOT, gets up, unperceived, and goes toward door, L. DOT appears anxious to follow him, as he beckons to her. This is through the dialogue.*)

Mrs. F. Well, I will go to say that if the Indigo trade had turned out different, which, however, is not a pleasant subject to allude to, we *might* have been lucky.

John. Well, here goes. (*Deals.*) Now, I wonder what my fortune will be to-night. Hum! (*Takes his cards.*) What ought I to throw out? Here, Dot, Dot.

(*DOT is about to follow the STRANGER, who is gone out, she starts at JOHN'S voice, and turns back.*)

What would you do, Dot?

Dot (*alarmed*). I, John; nothing.

John. Pshaw! you? No, the cards — which shall I throw out? (*DOT takes out the cards and throws them down.*) There, little woman, that will do. I won't call you away from May again.

(*DOT retires. The others, except TACKLETON, who watches her, gather round.*)

Mrs. F. I play, I think.

(*Music — During the game DOT has taken a candle from the table, timidly, and followed the STRANGER. The*

The sympathy of the audience for John is still further increased by giving them glimpses of the conduct of Dot and the Stranger which John does not have, but it is to be noted that these glimpses are not of the real situation, but of actions which may well be construed as evidence of Dot's infidelity.

light is seen directly afterward behind the blind of the large window. When it becomes stationary, TACKLETON advances and lays his hand upon JOHN'S shoulder.)

Tac. I'm sorry to disturb you, but a word immediately.

John. I'm going to deal! it's a crisis.

Tac. It is, come here, man, come.

John (rising and alarmed). What do you mean?

Tac. (leading him from the cards). Hush, John Perrybingle; I'm sorry for this; I am, indeed! I have been afraid of it; I have suspected it from the first.

John. What is it?

Tac. Hush. I'll show you. Can you bear to look through that window do you think?

John. Why not? *(Advancing.)*

Tac. A moment more. Don't commit any violence: it's of no use. It's dangerous, too. You're a strong made man; and you might do murder before you know it.

John. What do you mean, I say? Stand on one side.

(JOHN puts TACKLETON back, and advancing to the window, draws back the blind. The window looks into a warehouse, now lighted, in which are seen DOT and the STRANGER, as a young man, with his arm around her waist — she takes his white wig, and laughs, as she puts it on his head.)

John. What do I see! Dot! Mary! faithless! Yes, she adjusts the lie upon his head, and laughs at me, as she does it!

The audience now see only what John sees. They are thus identified with him, and have no more knowledge of the true state of affairs than he has himself.

(Wildly.) May this hand have power enough to dash them to the earth — but, no — I cannot — she was my wife — gone! lost forever!

(He falls upon the ground. As the others gather round him, TACKLETON draws the curtain. TABLEAU.

ACT III.

SCENE.— *Same as for Act I. The interior of JOHN PERRYBINGLE'S cottage. As the curtain rises slowly to plaintive music, JOHN is discovered, sitting by the fireplace, with his head upon his hands, R.*

John. I have sat here through the long, long night, until the stars grew pale, and the cold day broke — and the more I have thought about her the more I feel how desolate I am become — how totally the great bond of my life is rent asunder. (*Music. DOT enters mournfully, and sits down on the little stool at his feet. He is about to kiss her, but recollecting what has occurred, he reclines his head upon the table, hiding his face with his hands. DOT goes out, expressing great anxiety.*) And he is still beneath my roof! — the lover of her early choice; of whom she has thought and dreamed; for whom she has pined and pined, when I fancied her so happy by my side. Oh! agony, to think of it! (*He sees the gun hanging on the wall.*) What monstrous demon hastakenpossession of my thoughts and now whispers to me, that it is just to shoot this man as I would a wild beast.

For the audience to lose sympathy with Perrybingle during the pathetic passages of this act would be fatal, and a complete understanding of the motives underlying Dot's conduct might conceivably cause the audience to be a bit out of patience with John for his readiness to believe in Dot's faithlessness. Thus, the law that the audience must never be deceived is deliberately violated in order to conform to the fundamental law that interest and sympathy should be sustained at any cost.



CLYDE FITCH

A step will bring me to his side. I can kill him — kill him in his bed! (*Takes down the gun.*) It is loaded — I know that; and again the demon has changed my thoughts to scourges, to urge me on. I will kill him — here in his bed.

(*As he speaks, the fire, which was before nearly extinguished, burns up, and the CRICKET is heard. Music. He stops and listens for an instant — then speaks through the music.*)

The cricket on the hearth! (*puts down gun*) that she so loved — and told me so with her pleasant voice. Oh! what a voice it was for making household music at the fireside of an honest man — and she is nothing now to me — her love is another's — another's!

(*He bursts into tears, and sits down again by the fireside, R. Pause; music continues.*)

(*A knocking — JOHN starts.*) Who is that? (*Knocking repeated.*) Come in.

(*Enter TACKLETON.*)

Tac. John Perrybingle, my good fellow, how do you find yourself this morning?

John. I have had a poor night, master Tackleton, for I have been a good deal disturbed in my mind; but it's over now. I wish to speak a word or two with you.

(*Enter TILLY at D. R. and knock at D. L.*)

You are not married before noon.

Tac. No, plenty of time — plenty of time.

Til. Ow! If you please I can't make

nobody hear. I hope nobody ain't gone and been and died, if you please.

(She knocks at the STRANGER'S door, and then exits D. R.)

Tac. John Perrybingle, I hope there has been nothing — nothing rash in the night!

John. What do you mean?

Tac. Because as I came here I looked into the window of that room. It was empty, and he was gone. There has been no scuffle, eh?

John. Make yourself easy. He went into that room last night without word or harm from me, and nobody has entered it since.

Tac. Oh! well; I think he has got off pretty easily.

John. Look ye, master Tackleton, you showed me last night my wife — my wife that I love, secretly.

Tac. And tenderly.

John. Conniving at that man's disguise, and giving him opportunities of meeting her alone. I think there's no sight I wouldn't rather have seen than that. I think there's no man in the world I wouldn't have rather had to show it me.

Tac. I confess to having had my suspicions always; and that has made me objectionable here, I know.

John. But as you did show it me, and as you saw her — my wife — *my wife — that I love*, at this disadvantage, it is right and just that you should also see with my eyes, and look into my breast, and know what my mind is upon the

subject, for it's settled, and nothing can shake it now.

Tac. Go on, John Perrybingle, I'll listen to you.

John. I am a plain, rough man, with very little to recommend me. I am not a clever man, as you very well know. I am not a young man. I loved my little Dot, because I had seen her grow up from a child in her father's house; because I knew how precious she was; because she had been my life for years and years. There's many men I can't compare with, who never could have loved my little Dot like me, I think; but I did not — I feel it now, sufficiently consider her.

Tac. To be sure — giddiness, frivolity, fickleness, love of admiration — not considered; all left out of sight, ha!

John. You had best not interrupt me till you understand me; and you're wide of doing so. If yesterday I'd have struck down that man with a blow who dared to breathe a word against her, to-day I'd set my foot upon his face if he was my brother.

Tac. I did not mean anything, John Perrybingle, go on.

John. Did I consider that I took her, at her age and with her beauty, from her young companions and the many scenes of which she was the ornament; in which she was the brightest little star that ever shone; to shut her up from day to day in my dull house, and keep my tedious company? Did I consider how little suited I was to her sprightly humor, and how wearisome a plodding man like me must be to one of

her quick spirit? Did I consider that it was no merit in me, or claim in me, that I loved her when everybody must who knew her! Never! I took advantage of her hopeful nature and her cheerful disposition, and I married her. I wish I never had — for her sake, not for mine.

Tac. For your own as well, John.

John. I say *no*. Heaven bless her for the constancy with which she has tried to keep the knowledge of this from me. Poor girl! that I could ever hope she would be fond of me — that I could ever believe she had tried to keep the knowledge of this from me. Poor girl! that I could ever hope she would be fond of me — that I could ever believe she was.

Tac. She made a show of it — she made such a show of it, that, to tell you the truth, it was the origin of my mis-giving. Look at May Fielding, *she* never pretends to be so fond of me.

John. I only now begin to know how hard she has tried to be my dutiful and zealous wife. That will be some comfort to me when I am here alone.

Tac. Here alone? Oh! then you do mean to take some notice of this?

John. I mean to do her the greatest kindness, and make her the best reparation in my power.

Tac. Make *her* reparation? There must be something wrong here. You didn't mean that of course.

John (*seizing him by the collar*). Listen to me, and take care you hear me right. Listen to me — do I speak plainly?

Tac. Very plainly, indeed.

John. As if I meant it?

Tac. Very much as if you meant it.

John. I sat upon that hearth last night — all night — on the spot where she has often sat beside me with her sweet face looking into mine. I called up her whole life — its every passage — in review before me; and, *upon my soul she is innocent*, if there is one to judge the innocent and the guilty.

Tac. Very likely, John Perrybingle, very likely.

John. Passion and distrust have left me; nothing but my grief remains. In an unhappy moment, some old lover, forsaken, perhaps for me, against her will, returned. In an unhappy moment, wanting time to think of what she did, she made herself a party to his treachery by concealing it. Last night she saw him in the interview we witnessed; it was wrong; but otherwise than this she is innocent, if there is truth on earth.

Tac. If that is your opinion?

John. So let her go. Go, with my blessing for the many happy hours she has given me, and my forgiveness for any pang she has caused me. She'll never hate me. She'll learn to like me better when I am not a drag upon her.

(DOT appears at the back, pale and anxious,
D. R. C.)

This is the day on which I took her, with so little thought for her enjoyment, from her home. To-day she shall return to it, and I will trouble her no more. Her father and mother will be here to-day — we had made a little plan for

Contrast between John's interpretation of Dot's conduct and the view taken by Tackleton.

keeping it together — and they shall take her home. I can trust her there, or anywhere. She leaves me without blame — and she will live so, I am sure. If I should die — I may, perhaps, while she is still young — I have lost some courage, in a few hours — she'll find that I remembered her, and loved her to the last! This is the end of what you showed me. Now it's over.

(Both rising.)

Dot (coming forward). Oh! no, John, not over — do not say it's over yet; I have heard your noble words — I could not steal away, pretending to be ignorant of what has affected me with such deep gratitude. Do not say it's over, till the clock has struck again.

John. No hand can make the clock which will strike again for me the hours that are gone. But let it be so, if you will, my dear. It will strike soon. It's of little matter what we say. I'd try to please you in a harder case than that.

Tac. Well, I must be off; for, when the clock strikes again, it'll be necessary for me to be on my way to church. Good morning, John Perrybingle, I'm sorry to be deprived of the pleasure of your company — sorry for the loss and the occasion of it, too.

John. I have spoken plainly?

Tac. Oh! quite.

John. And you'll remember what I've said?

Tac. Why, if you compel me to make the observation, I'm not likely to forget it.

John. I'll see you into your chaise —

I shall not come back here until the clock strikes.

(TACKLETON makes a rude obeisance to
DOT. As he is going out with JOHN,
TILLY enters with the baby. JOHN
pauses — kisses it — and rushes
out. DOT bursts into tears.)

Til. (*howling*). Ow! if you please,
don't — it's enough to dead and bury
the baby — so it is, if you please.

Dot. Will you bring him sometimes
to see his father, Tilly, when I can't
live here, and have gone to my old home?

Til. Ow — w! if you please, don't!
oh! where has everybody gone and been
and done with everybody, making every-
body else so wretched — ow — w — w!
(*As she is going off she meets CALEB and
BERTHA entering.*)

Cal. Heyday? What's the matter
here?

Ber. What! Mary not at the wedding!

Cal. (*aside to DOT*). I told her you
would not be there, mum. I heard as
much last night — but, bless you, *I* don't
care for what they say — *I* don't believe
'em. There ain't much of me, but that
little should be torn to pieces sooner
than I'd trust a word against you.

(*Takes her hand.*)

Dot. You are very kind, Caleb, very.

Ber. Mary, where is your hand? Ah,
here it is! here it is! (*Kisses it.*) I
heard them speaking softly among them-
selves, last night, of some blame against
you. They were wrong.

Cal. They were wrong.

Ber. I know it — I told them so — I

scorned to hear a word. There is nothing half so real, or so true about me, as she is — my sister!

Cal. Bertha, my dear, I have something on my mind I want to tell you, while we three are alone; hear me kindly. I have a confession to make to you, my darling.

Ber. A confession, father?

Cal. I have wandered from the truth, and lost myself, intending to be kind to you. My dear, blind daughter, hear me, and forgive me.

Ber. Forgive *you*, father — so good, so kind!

Cal. Your road in life was rough, my poor one, and I meant to smooth it for you. I have altered objects, changed the characters of people, invented many things that never have been, to make you happier — Heaven forgive me — and surrounded you with fancies.

Ber. But living people are not fancies, father, you can't change them.

Cal. I have done so, Bertha. There is one person that you know, my dove!

Ber. Oh! father, why do you say I know! What, and whom do *I* know — I, who have no leader — I, so miserably blind!

Cal. The marriage that takes place to-day, May's marriage, is with a sordid, stern, grinding man; a hard master to you and me, my dear, for many years; ugly in his looks, and in his nature; cold and callous always — unlike what I have painted him to you, in everything, my child, in everything.

Ber. Oh! why did you ever fill my

heart so full, and then come in, like death, and tear away the objects of my love? Oh! Heaven, how blind I am, how helpless, and alone! Mary tell me what my home is — what it truly is.

Dot. It is a poor place, Bertha, very poor and bare, indeed the house will scarcely keep out wind and rain another winter. It is as roughly shielded from the weather, Bertha, as your poor father in his sackcloth coat.

Ber. (*leading DOT aside*). And the presents, Mary, that came at my wish; who sent them, did you?

Dot. No!

Ber. (*shaking her head, presses her hands to her eyes*). Dear Mary, a moment more, look across the room where my father is, and tell me what you see.

Dot. I see an old man worn with care and work; but striving hard, in many ways, for one great sacred object; and I honor his gray head, and bless it.

Ber. (*leaves DOT, goes toward CALEB, and falls at his knees*). I feel as if my sight was restored. There is not a gallant figure on the earth that I would cherish so devotedly as this — the grayer and more worn, the dearer — father.

Cal. My Bertha!

Ber. And, in my blindness, I believed him to be so different!

Cal. The fresh, smart father in the blue coat, Bertha — he's gone.

Ber. Nothing is gone, dearest father. No; everything is here in you — father — Mary —

Cal. Yes, my dear; here she is.

Ber. There is no change in *her*.

Knowledge of the truth makes
Bertha's love for Caleb all
the stronger.

You never told me anything of *her* that was not true?

Cal. I should have done it, my dear, I fear, if I could have made her better than she was. But I must have changed her for the worse, if I had changed her at all — nothing could improve her, Bertha.

Dot. More changes than you may think for may happen, though. You mustn't let them startle you too much, if they do. Bertha! hark! are those wheels upon the road?

Ber. (listens). Yes, coming very fast.

Dot (flurried). I — I — I know you have a quick ear; though, as I said, just now — *(listens)* — there are great changes in the world — great changes; and we can't do better, we can't do better, I say, than to prepare ourselves to be surprised at hardly anything. They are wheels, indeed — coming nearer — nearer! — very close — and now you hear them stopping at the garden gate — and now you hear a step, outside the door — and now — ah! he is here!

(Music. She utters a cry of delight. The STRANGER, now a young man, comes in, throwing his hat upon the ground. DOT puts both her hands before CALEB'S eyes.)

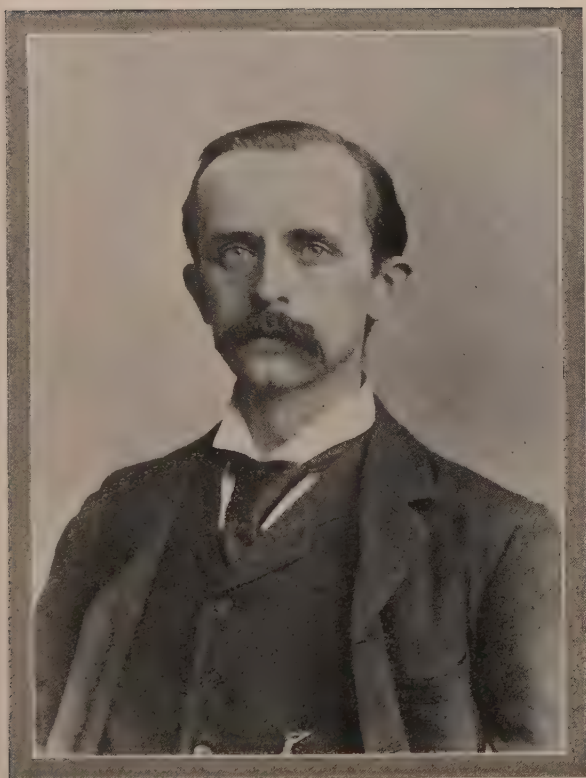
Dot. It's over?

Edw. Yes.

Dot. Happily over?

Edw. Yes.

Dot. Do you recollect the voice, dear Caleb? Did you ever hear the like of it before?



HAIRIE

Cal. If my boy in the golden South Americas was alive ——

Dot. He is alive! (*Takes her hands away from CALEB'S eyes.*) Look at him! and see where he stands before you — healthy and strong! — your own dear son — your own dear, living, loving brother, Bertha. (*They embrace.*)

Revelation of the Stranger's identity.

JOHN enters, and starts back.

John. Why — how's this? What does this mean?

Cal. It means, John, that my own boy is — come back from the golden South Americas — him that you fitted out and sent away, yourself — him that you were always such a friend to.

John (*advances to shake hands and then recoils*). Edward! was it you?

Dot. Now tell him all, Edward, tell him all, and don't spare me, for nothing shall make me spare myself in his eyes ever again.

Edw. I was the man.

John. And could you steal disguised into the house of your old friend? There was a frank boy once — how many years is it, Caleb, since we heard he was dead, and had it proved, as we thought? — who never would have done that.

Edw. There was a generous friend of mine once — more a father to me than a friend — who never would have judged me or any other man, unheard. You were he — so I am certain you will hear me now.

John. Well, that's but fair. I will.

Edw. You must know that when I left here a boy, I was in love; and my love

was returned. She was a very young girl, who, perhaps (you may tell me), didn't know her own mind. But I knew mine, and I had a passion for her.

John. You had — *you!*

Edw. Indeed I had, and she returned it; I have ever since believed she did, and now I am sure she did.

John. Heaven help me! this is worse than all.

Edw. Constant to her, and returning full of hope after many hardships and perils, to redeem my part of our old contract, I heard, twenty miles away, that she was false to me, that she had forgotten me, and had bestowed herself upon another and a richer man. I had no mind to reproach her, but I wished to see her, and to prove beyond dispute that this was true. That I might have the truth — the real truth — observing freely for myself, and judging for myself, without obstruction on the one hand, or presenting my own influence, if I had any, before her, on the other, I dressed myself unlike myself — you know how — and waited on the road, you know where. You had no suspicion of me, neither had — had she (*points to DOT*) until I whispered into her ear at the fireside, and she so nearly betrayed me.

Dot (eagerly). But when she knew that Edward was alive and had come back, and when she knew his purpose — she advised him by all means to keep his secret close, for his old friend, John Perrybingle, was much too open in his nature, and too clumsy in all artifice, being a clumsy man in general, to keep it

Complete revelation of the secret, which serves an economic purpose by (1) lightening the burden of Caleb and Bertha, (2) rescuing May from an unhappy marriage, and (3) restoring John and Dot to their former happy relations.

from him. And when she — that's me, John — told him all, and how his old sweetheart had believed him to be dead, and how she had, at last, been overpersuaded by her mother into a marriage which the silly, dear old thing called advantageous; and when she — that's me again, John — told him they were not yet married, though close upon it, and that it would be nothing but a sacrifice if it went on, for that there was no love on her side, and when he went nearly mad with joy to hear it, then she — that's me again — said she would go between them, as she had often done before in old times, John, and would sound his sweetheart, and be sure that what she — me again, John — said and thought was right, and it *was* right, John! and they were brought together, John! and they were married, John, an hour ago! and here, here! (*Runs to door and brings in MAY*) and here's the bride, and Gruff & Tackleton may die a bachelor, and I am a happy little woman! May God bless you!

John (advancing). My own darling Dot!

Dot (retreats). No, John, no! hear all — don't love me any more, John, till you have heard every word I have to say. It was wrong to have a secret from you, John. I'm very sorry, I didn't think it any harm, till I came and sat down by you on the little stool last night, but when I knew by what was written in your face that you had seen me walking in the gallery with Edward, and knew what you thought, I felt how giddy and

how wrong it was. But, oh! dear John, how could you, could you think so?

John. Little woman! Dot! How could I, indeed?

Dot. Don't love me yet, please, John, not for a long time yet. When I was sad about this intended marriage, dear, it was because I remembered May and Edward such young lovers, and knew that her heart was far away from Gruff & Tackleton. You believe that now, don't you, John?

John. I do, I do. (*Advances.*)

Dot. No, keep your place, John. When I laugh at you, as I sometimes do, John, and call you clumsy, and a dear old goose, and names of that sort, it's because I love you, John, so well, and take such pleasure in your ways, and wouldn't see you altered in the least respect to have you made a king to-morrow.

Cal. Hooraw! hooraw! my opinion!

Dot. When I first came home here I was half afraid I mightn't learn to love you every bit as well as I hoped, and prayed I might; but, dear John, every day, and every hour, I loved you more and more; and if I could have loved you better than I do, the noble words I heard you say this morning would have made me, but I can't; all the affection I had — it was a great deal, John — I gave you, as you well deserved, long, long ago, and I have no more left to give. Now, my dear husband, take me to your heart again. That's my home, John; and never, never think of sending me to any other.

(*She rushes into his arms; at this moment
TACKLETON enters.*)

Tac. Why, what the devil's this, John Perrybingle? There's some mistake! I beg your pardon, sir (*to EDWARD*). I haven't the pleasure of knowing you; but if you can do me the favor to spare me that young lady; she has rather a particular engagement with me this morning.

Edw. But I can't spare her — I couldn't think of it.

Tac. What do you mean, you vagabond!

Edw. I mean that as I can make allowance for your being vexed, I am as deaf to *harsh* discourse this morning as I was to *all* discourse last night.

Tac. I don't understand you.

Edw. I am sorry, sir (*holding out MAY'S ring finger*), that the young lady can't accompany you to church; but as she has been there once this morning, perhaps you will excuse her.

(*TACKLETON looks at ring, scratches his ear, and takes a little parcel containing a ring from his pocket.*)

Tac. Miss Slowboy, will you have the kindness to throw that in the fire? (*She does so.*) Thank'ee!

Edw. It was a previous engagement, quite an old engagement, that prevented my wife from keeping her appointment with you, I assure you.

May. Mr. Tackleton will do me justice to acknowledge that I revealed it to him faithfully; and that I told him many times I never could forget it.

Tac. Oh! certainly, oh! to be sure!
oh! it's all right, it's quite correct!
Mrs. Edward Plummer, I infer —

Edw. That's the name.

Tac. Ah! I shouldn't have known
you, sir! I give you joy, sir!

Edw. Thank'ee.

Tac. Mrs. Perrybingle, I'm sorry you
haven't done me a very great kindness,
— but, upon my life, I'm sorry — I'm
sorry — you are better than I thought
you! John Perrybingle, I'm sorry —
you understand me, that's enough. It's
quite correct, ladies and gentlemen all,
and perfectly satisfactory. Good morn-
ing!

(Exit, C.)

John. Now we'll make a day of it,
if ever there was one!

Dot. And we'll have such a feast,
and such a merrymaking! Dear John,
I hardly know whether to laugh or cry.
My goodness, John, there's old Mrs.
Fielding at the door all this time, and
nobody has asked her out of the chaise.
Go and fetch her in. *(Exit JOHN, C.)*
And Caleb, run to father's and bring him
in, and mother, too, and anything they
have got to eat and drink that's ready.
(Exit CALEB.) And May, spare her for
a few minutes, Edward, there's the tub
of ale in the cellar, and there's the key;
and Bertha shall look after these vege-
tables; and we've a nice ham! What
a happy, happy, little woman I mean to
be! *(Busiles about with the others,
moving tables, plates, etc.)*

(Enter JOHN and MRS. FIELDING.)

John. There, mum, there's your son-in-law, and a fine feller he is!

Mrs. F. That ever I should have lived to see this day! Carry me to my grave!

John. Not at all, mum; you're not dead, nor anything like it, nor won't be, we hope, for many a year to come. There let them tell their own story, and get out of their scrape as they can, and as I am sure they will.

(*He brings EDWARD, MAY, and MRS. FIELDING together, and pushes them toward the fireplace. Enter CALEB, with DOT's father and mother and one or two neighbors. They embrace DOT.*)

Cal. How d'ye do, everybody? Here they are, and here are we — and won't we be jolly? Halloo! who are you?

(*Enter a MAN, with two parcels.*)

Man. Mr. Tackleton's compliments, and as he hasn't got no use for the cake himself, perhaps you'll eat it. There it is.

Cal. Law!

Man. And Mr. Tackleton's compliments, and he's sent a few toys for the baby — they ain't ugly.

Dot. Why, what can this mean!

(*Enter TACKLETON.*)

Tac. Mrs. Perrybingle, it means this — I'm sorry, more sorry than I was this morning. John Perrybingle, I'm sour by disposition, but I can't help being sweetened, more or less, by coming face to face with such a man as you, Caleb.

That unconscious little nurse gave me a broken hint last night, of which I have found the thread. I blush to think how easily I might have bound you and your daughter to me, and what a miserable idiot I was when I took her for one. Friends, one and all, my house is very lonely to-day; I have not so much as a cricket on my hearth; I have scared them all away; be gracious to me — let me join this happy party. Do!

John. Of course, and heartily glad we are to see you! we'll make you so jolly that you sha'n't believe you're yourself!

Dot. John, you won't send me home this evening, will you!

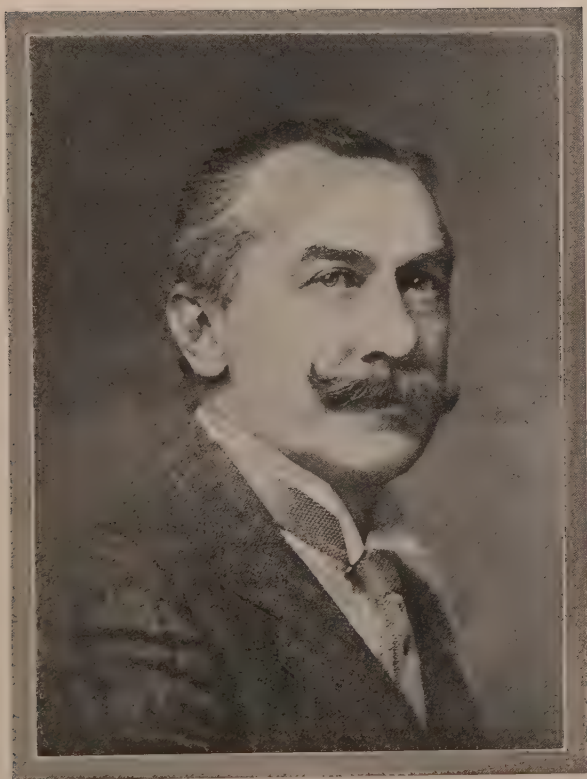
(JOHN embraces her.)

Edw. A dance! a dance! Bertha, here's your harp, now play us your liveliest tune. Won't you dance, Mary? (*DOT shakes her head.*) Nor you, John? No. Then here goes!

(*BERTHA plays the harp. Music. MAY and EDWARD get up and dance for a little time alone. Then JOHN throws his pipe away, takes DOT around the waist, and joins them. Presently TACKLETON goes off with MRS. FIELDING; then DOT'S father and mother join in — lastly CALEB and MISS SLOWBOY, and Neighbors. General Dance.*

Total relaxation of the dramatic strain.

THE END.



WALTER BROWNE

APPENDIX IV

Plays Recommended for Study

APPENDIX IV

PLAYS RECOMMENDED FOR STUDY

1. AS A MAN THINKS, by Augustus Thomas; Duffield & Company, New York.
2. CANDIDA, by George Bernard Shaw; Brentano's, New York.
3. THE CLIMBERS, by Clyde Fitch; Macmillan Company, New York.
4. THE GREAT DIVIDE, by William Vaughn Moody; Macmillan Company, New York.
5. THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST, by Oscar Wilde; Walter H. Baker & Co., Boston.
6. THE MAN FROM HOME, by Tarkington and Wilson; Harper & Brothers, New York.
7. THE MELTING-POT, by Israel Zangwill; Macmillan Company, New York.
8. THE SERVANT IN THE HOUSE, by Charles Rann Kennedy; Harper & Brothers, New York.
9. SWEET LAVENDER, by Arthur W. Pinero; Walter H. Baker & Co., Boston.
10. YOUNG MRS. WINTHROP, by Bronson Howard; Samuel French, New York.

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